Ball Toss

Posted originally on the Archive of Our Own at http://archiveofourown.org/works/18602140.

Rating:	Explicit
Archive Warning:	No Archive Warnings Apply
Category:	M/M
Fandom:	Hannibal (TV)
Relationship:	Will Graham/Hannibal Lecter
Characters:	Will Graham, Hannibal Lecter, Alana Bloom, Matthew Brown (Hannibal)
Additional Tags:	Carnival AU, Bottom Will, Rude Will, Anal Sex, Unprotected Sex, sex with strangers, Public(ish) Sex, Will is a Carney, Hannibal is Hannibal, Graphic murder stuff, Slight consumption of blood, Bound sex (consensual), Dark Will y'all, Submissive Will, Praise Kink, Hannibal Lecter is the Chesapeake Ripper, Hannibal is a Cannibal, Will Graham is a Cannibal, Anal Fingering, blow jobs (mentioned), Daddy Kink, Sugar Daddy Hannibal, Frottage, Coming In Pants
Language:	English
Series:	Part 1 of New Life
Collections:	Wendigo & Stag
Stats:	Published: 2019-04-26 Completed: 2019-05-14 Words: 22,307 Chapters: 4/4

Ball Toss

by raiast

Summary

The carnival AU no one asked for. Hannibal accompanies Alana to a carnival and meets one Will Graham, whose game booth is less than above board. Hannibal does not approve.

Chapter 1

On the outskirts of Baltimore's suburbs sits a plot of land that sees use only seven months out of the year. In the early Spring months, April and May, just after the snow melts and the weather turns to a consistent and pleasantly sunny warmth, the classic cars come out of storage to gather and flaunt antique and restored models. In the fall, September and October, the space is taken over by an incredible hay bale maze and pumpkin patch. During the summer months the land is occupied by various concerts and festivals. For one weekend in July, it is home to a travelling carnival.

Hannibal Lecter could easily count on one hand the number of carnivals he has attended in his lifetime. There was good reason for this. He had long since concluded that if he should be surrounded by a cacophony of lights and sounds it would be better spent in the Opera house, observing the great works of playwrights long since dead. He has no need for gaudy colors and shrieking children and all things... *sticky.* Not to mention tromping through grass fields in his $200 Italian leather loafers, avoiding mud and muck and some things altogether unidentifiable, is not exactly his cup of tea.

But, alas, his dear friend and previous mentee Alana Bloom had expressed her deep and regrettable consternation the previous week at dinner that her lover, one Margot Verger, was called out of the area unpredictably (and, in Hannibal's opinion, quite timely) on family business and would be unable to attend the carnival with her as previously planned. Hannibal, being a gentleman and a fool, had casually offered to accompany Alana instead, so that her weekend might not be a total wash.

And Alana had accepted. Because of course she had.

Thus found the good doctor, one stickily humid afternoon near the end of July, strolling arm in arm through the trodden grass walkways between food vendors and game booths. Alana, bless her soul, seemed to understand inherently that there was absolutely no chance of getting Hannibal to board any of the numerous, rickety rides that the proprietors had slapped together for the weekend and avoided the subject altogether. They had made a casual loop through the eateries once with sweet, trusting Alana having purchased and ingested a variety of offerings that made even Hannibal, with his unique and eclectic tastes, blanch; cornmeal wrapped hot dogs on a stick, deep fried cheese curds and a garish pink spun sugar that made him feel his own teeth rotting by proxy.

They were now weaving through the game booths, though neither had expressed any interest in playing. They passed a moving target shooting game, a basketball tossing contest and a fishing game that looked largely put together for the toddlers in attendance. Hannibal's eyes had darted lazily across all of these booths with disinterest as he and Alana discussed (quite professionally) an exceedingly difficult patient of hers, his mentee turned comrade eliciting his advice for advanced treatments. He almost didn't look over at all as they pass by a booth for a throwing game, but out of habit his eyes flick over and freeze when he spots the attendee running the booth.

Rich, chocolate curls fall in a riotous halo to frame a face that is somehow cherubic and masculine all at once. A fine layer of dark scruff paints the man's cheeks and jaw, accenting lips that are pink and full. His eyes, bright and sharp and a shade of blue Hannibal has seen only in his dreams, dart up to meet his own as though he senses Hannibal's attention, a smirk twisting his kissable lips as the attendant spots a potential customer. He had been leaning with a casual demeanor against the corner of the playing area but perks up to meander along the counter, matching their steps as they begin to pass along.

"Come, try your aim and win the pretty lady a prize!" he beckons, somehow managing to make the call personal and enticing, although Hannibal knows that he has shouted that and more at a hundred other guests that day to draw in business.

To Alana's amusement, and his own shock, Hannibal finds himself drifting closer to the booth. "How much?" he asks, reaching for his wallet as he eyes the deceptively simple pyramid of metal milk jugs that sit waiting several feet into the booth.

The man across the counter beams at him with an easy grin that stops the doctor's heart for a moment. "Three balls, five dollars," he purrs, reaching below his counter to a basket and drawing up three softballs to place on the ledge between them. "Knock 'em down and the fair lady gets her pick," he sweeps a hand around to the various stuffed animals hanging around the booth, just waiting for a victor to claim them.

Hannibal pulls a five dollar bill from his wallet and Alana lets out an amused chortle, tugging on his arm. "Oh, Hannibal, you don't have to," she insists. But the man across the counter has yet to drop his gaze, has one dark brow raised in what looks to be a challenge, and Hannibal finds that he very much has to, though he can't quite explain why. He slaps the bill down on the counter between them and reaches for the first ball, testing its heft in his hand before he lines himself up with the target.

With the effortless grace and precision Hannibal has been blessed with all his life, he winds his arm back and lets the ball fly. Though he could swear he struck the pyramid dead center, only the top bottle of the six slides off to clatter to the ground.

"A good start!" the attendant crows encouragingly, though Hannibal can't help but detect a layer of sarcasm and derision beneath the positive feedback. He can feel his brows beginning to furrow, his lips twitching, and smooths out his features as he collects the second ball.

That one, he knows, *definitely* strikes home in the center of the remaining bottles, yet his target scarcely moves. Hannibal frowns outright this time, reaching for the third ball with a snarl as he ignores the employee's generic comment about 'not enough mustard', whatever *that* means.

He lobs the final ball, again finds that it strikes dead center to no result. By this point he is seething and turns on the attendant, with his easy, casual grin and his stupidly beautiful hair with a snarl. "What game are you playing, exactly?" he growls, leaning over the counter to close the distance between them.

The attendant gazes back at him with practiced indifference, his eyebrow and lip quirking up all once in humor. "Ball toss," he responds simply. He reaches below the counter to draw up

another three balls as if to prove his point. “Go again? I’ll even leave the top one off.”

“This game is rigged,” Hannibal declares, flatly ignoring Alana’s plaintive pleas to just forget about it and move on.

A second eyebrow joins the first on the attendant’s forehead as his grin widens. He steps backwards through his booth to the target in the middle with all the practice of one that has been accused of this before. “Glued down, aren’t they?” he asks, then sweeps his arm back through the remains of the pyramid to send the bottles tumbling to the ground. “Perhaps you’ve not as much strength as anticipated,” he amends, his tone low and flat and beckoning further argument.

Hannibal gives another low growl as he finally allows Alana to pull him away from the booth. As they retreat he swears he can detect a raspy, low chuckle emitting behind them and the monster within beats against its fleshy prison. This will not stand, he decides obstinately. Not at all.

He accompanies Alana through the carnival for another hour before they call it a day and he shuttles her home. He stops off at home for a quick dinner, having spent the afternoon absolutely *refusing* to consume anything at the carnival. After that it is a simple matter of running down to his basement to ensure he has all the supplies he will need, and then he is free to return to the carnival. He’s glad that he had mentally noted with accuracy that the booth he intends to invade is on the outskirts of the gathering, near enough where Hannibal is able to slip in and park against the bordering fence.

The sun has dropped completely by now, the sky above black and the only illumination offered is from the booths that are slowly beginning to shutdown and the rides that twist and sail through the air. Hannibal notes the correct game booth and slips in through the back silently. In just a few steps he can see, with pleasure, that the sole occupant is the man that had stolen his money earlier that day. The curly haired beauty leans against the far wall in a bored manner, thumbing methodically through the cash that he had collected throughout his shift.

With a suddenness that shocks even Hannibal, the man freezes in his actions, his body still save for the sharp eyes that dart over to the darkened corner in which Hannibal lurks.

“You shouldn’t be in here,” he says firmly, though his tone belies the fact that he recognizes a predator in his midst. “Employees only.”

“I’ve only come for what’s mine,” Hannibal finds himself purring back.

“You want the five dollars or the stuffed animal for your girlfriend?” the attendant snorts, and he seems to deem Hannibal as very obviously *not* a threat then, for he goes back to sifting through the stack of bills in his hands.

Hannibal considers telling the man that the price owed is his life, and damn the consequences of losing the element of surprise. What leaves his mouth, however, is all the more shocking.

“She’s not my lover. Merely a friend,” he explains as he steps closer. Ah, yes, of course he would keep casual conversation as he closes the distance between them, to keep the attendant all the more unawares. “What is your name?” he asks, because he should know the name of the man he is about to kill...wait...should he? Is that something Hannibal has cared about in the past?

He comes to pause just in front of the man, this Botticelli come to life, and the weight of the hypodermic needle he had previously prepared is heavy in the pocket of his jacket. He can feel the warmth radiating off of his prey and Hannibal is slightly confused to find that he wishes to press all the more closer for it.

The attendant has frozen before him once more, his breaths short and shallow. “Will Graham,” he breathes out between them, his body shifting forward ever so slightly as he obstinately meets Hannibal’s burning gaze. “What are you doing here, Hannibal?” he asks softly then, turns to drop the money in his hands into a nearby lockbox, and Hannibal is struck with a myriad of emotions.

The shock at his name falling from the man’s--Will Graham’s--lips he can discount easily; he heard Alana say it earlier that day, after all. And though it is surprising that of all the names this carnival worker would hear throughout the day it is Hannibal’s he remembers, it’s not altogether unbelievable. What strikes him even harder somehow, is the way the three syllables can be uttered so easily and so carelessly *seductively.* All at once Hannibal is filled with the desire to hear his name fall off of the tongue before him over and over again; if it be in pleasure, good, if it be in terror and pleading, all the better.

He is just deciding that he is going to tell the man before him the truth, that he is here for him, for his life--the price of his dishonorable occupation--when Will’s attention is caught by a guest passing by his booth. He perks up all at once, slipping away from Hannibal as though he wasn’t just about to be murdered to lean over the front counter.

“Hey, hey!” he crows with a bright smile, reaching his arm long and low out of the booth. “If it isn’t today’s big champion!”

Hannibal follows suit, hovers just behind him to peer over the counter as a small boy, wielding a plush dog toy nearly as large as himself, plods along with his parents. The child flashes a bright smile up at Will and shuffles the animal in his grasp so he can extend his hand for a high-five as they pass by.

Hannibal takes another moment to study this Will Graham as he watches the young boy struggle on with his prize. His enjoyment is evident, his pleasure at making the child’s day palpable. His pale skin and dark curls are illuminated only by the light of the surrounding booths, but Hannibal finds him even more beautiful all the same. He gives a soft hum as he settles behind the carney; the heat buzzing between them flames.

“You let the child win,” he murmurs.

Will Graham gives a soft snort, flashes a derisive grin over his shoulder at the intruder behind him. “I only activate the magnets for douchebags,” he explains, turns around fully to give a

tug to Hannibal's lapels with a playful grin. "And pretentious assholes that show up to carnivals in three-piece suits."

Hannibal is just opening his mouth to argue the value of a fine wardrobe regardless of the venue when Will gives another tug to his lapel and pulls him closer, erasing the distance between their mouths. Their lips close flush against each other--perfectly, Hannibal can't help but notice--and he sighs as the unkempt man pressed against his chest slips a wet tongue out to beckon entrance against the seal of Hannibal's lips. He allows the invasion without a thought, his mind reeling dizzily as their tongues slide against each other and he tastes honey and cloves and *home.*

His hands reach up to tangle into impossibly soft curls and he tells himself it's to wrench this dangerous creature away from his person but he finds instead that he is holding the man all the more closer to him, the only pulling he is doing is guiding them both farther into the booth, around a corner and away from the prying eyes of passersby. He pins Will against a wall of the booth then, his body a hard, hot line pressed insistently against the younger man's form.

Will does not balk at the direction, nor the intrusion. Instead, he lets loose the most delicious sounding moan, his lithe body writhing forward to grind against the man that has him trapped. His own hands come up to paw at Hannibal's torso beneath his suit jacket, unbuttoning first his light grey waistcoat and then beginning on the ochre shirt beneath it. When he reaches the upper buttons, covered by the tangerine colored tie, he snorts, grabbing at the offending item and loosening it just enough to pull it over his head, mussing his neatly placed sandy locks in the process.

Will moans again, his hands reaching now to glide through Hannibal's locks, alternating between gentle strokes and tight, demanding twists as their mouths move together.

"This is not the place for this," Hannibal utters when they pull apart for a breath, and the young man levels him with a devilish grin.

He reaches over to a rope suspended at the corner of the wall and gives a tug, releasing a sheet that drops to cover the front of the booth and dropping them into near darkness. Officially closed to business. "Depends on how quiet you can be," the little imp purrs, returning his attention to the buttons on Hannibal's shirt. He's surprised to find his jacket and waistcoat have already been peeled off of him and dropped to the ground. He brings his own hands up to work open the buttons of the unfortunate flannel piece the attendant is wearing.

"This is ill-advised," Hannibal amends in a murmur against the soft skin of Will's throat. He can feel the vibrations of the man's chuckle when he lathes his tongue over his pulse point; he can also feel the blood rushing beneath as the heart pumping it races. Hannibal lets his teeth graze the spot, wondering if it might not be more prudent to follow his instinct and allow them to sink in, to end this.

"I'm negative," Will assures him, lets out a whimper of a moan as Hannibal's furred chest is revealed to him. "For everything. I don't--I don't usually do this sort of thing. Truly."

It's Hannibal's turn to chuckle as he frees Will's chest and immediately pushes the shirt from his shoulders. Even in the near-absolute darkness he can see that the boy is pale despite his job, likely for the shade his booth provides. He's lean, underfed, surely, but with muscles that hold subtle definition rather than brutish bulges. There is strength there, coiled just beneath the surface. He runs his hands down the smooth expanse of chest, across the belly that has just a coy hint of soft, dark hair trailing down to disappear beneath the waistline of his jeans.

"Yet you're so trusting of me?" he counters, and Will gives a snort, leans back against the wall behind him to smirk up at Hannibal.

"*Please.* You showed up to a damn carnival in a thousand dollar suit, I hardly think you're the type that would be riddled with STDs."

"A suit that you seem keen on destroying," Hannibal gives a pointed glance to the articles littered around them in the grass and dirt before he reaches forward to tug at the younger man's belt. When he glances up again Will is biting his bottom lip against a grin, mischief dancing in his eyes.

"Send me the dry cleaning bill," he breathes, his own hands finding the top of Hannibal's trousers and pulling him closer even as they work at undoing the fly.

Hannibal considers pointing out that Will and his carnival would long since be gone by that time, instead pushes forward to seal their mouths together once more. The cheeky thing before him is much more enjoyable when he isn't speaking, Hannibal decides. Will wiggles his hips when Hannibal gets his jeans opened and pushed down, shuffles out of the article altogether and kicks it aside without ever breaking the contact between them. He must have kicked out of his shoes at some point as well, the sneaky boy. Hannibal pulls back to let his eyes take in the full extent of Will Graham.

He reaches between them to grasp Will's cock, hard and red and already leaking, and gives it a firm stroke. Will cries out at the sensation and falls back against the wall, Hannibal shushes him by inserting two fingers into the wet heat of his lax mouth. Will meets his gaze then, eyes flashing as he wets Hannibal's fingers with teasing sucks and a rolling tongue. He withdraws them after a moment, releasing Will's cock to grasp one of his legs, encouraging the limb to wrap around Hannibal's hip. With no hesitation, no warning, he reaches between them and pushes his wet fingers against a dry hole, unrelenting in his pressure until both have sunk in to the second knuckle.

It's quite a stretch for no preparation, and too dry even with the aid of Will's saliva, but Hannibal begins a steady pumping all the same and Will, to his credit, is able to keep his noises down to a low panting as Hannibal works him open. He manages to finish shoving down Hannibal's pants and wets his own hand, slipping it between them to stroke Hannibal's aching cock.

"*Christ,*" Will moans when the fingers within him bend and press insistently on his prostate; the remaining leg holding him up buckles but Hannibal catches his weight, hauling him off the ground entirely to pin him against the wall. Will's legs move instinctively to wrap tightly around his torso and the boy gives another pitiful whimper as Hannibal's fingers are replaced by something altogether larger.

He shushes Will as he presses inside him, instantly feels like a hypocrite when groans at the feeling of his cock being encompassed by Will's searing heat. They both take a moment when Hannibal is fully sheathed within him, Will's head tipped back against the wall as he pants and Hannibal's face buried in the crook of Will's neck. When Will rocks his hips forward Hannibal stifles a second groan by latching his teeth around Will's shoulder. He begins fucking into him then, the way eased slightly by the pre-cum that Will's tight hole is squeezing out of him with every thrust. It would perhaps be better with lube, but this way is raw and rough and Hannibal finds that he doesn't dislike it at all; especially not for the small squeaks that he is pulling from Will's throat with every thrust.

"I daresay this is even more enjoyable than my initial reason for coming here," Hannibal murmurs against Will's throat between sucking bruising kisses along the pale column. He has no idea what prompted him to say it. Perhaps just so when Will responds with his panted inquiry as to why, exactly, Hannibal *did* come back, he can meet Will's eyes with his own burning gaze, feel him clench around him in shock and terror when he tells him, "I came to kill you."

"Oh, *God,*" Will cries out, unheeding of the noise, and he jerks his head back so quickly Hannibal can hear the *thwack* of it connecting with the plywood wall behind him. He does clench around Hannibal then, but it's less due to terror and more for the fact that the boy is coming hard between them, his release striping white across his chest messily as his spurting cock bounces from the rhythm of Hannibal's thrusts. Hannibal fucks into that tight heat in earnest, angling each thrust to ensure Will's prostate is being stimulated constantly. Will clings to him as though Hannibal were the only thing anchoring him to this earth; his legs wrap tighter around his waist, his nails dig into the flesh of his back and drag raggedly downward, his head falls forward to Hannibal's shoulder as he gasps a chant of thank you, *thank you.*

The sting of his flesh being pierced and the tang of copper filling his nose pushes Hannibal over the edge and he slams into Will one last time, leaning the weight of both of them heavily into the wall before him as he pulses his release deep into the beauty in his arms. They stay that way for several long minutes, attempting to breathe in more than shallow pants of air and quell their racing hearts. Hannibal dips his head down to lap at the salty release that coats Will's equally salty skin, pulling another weak moan from Will.

"That was…" Will murmurs, his voice lazy and lax and sated from pleasure. "Christ. Well, better than being murdered, by far." Hannibal pulls out of Will and guides his feet back down to the ground; the boy leans heavily against the wall behind him. "Could you…" he trails off, nodding to a spot behind Hannibal.

Hannibal turns and spots the terrycloth towel on the back counter, tucks himself away and retrieves it for Will, who gives a nod of thanks when he turns it over to him. He gives a soft sigh as he considers the remains of his clothing peppered through the grass around them and begins by collecting his shirt and brushing it off the best be can before slipping it onto his shoulders. The blood on his back will ruin the item, regardless; Will didn't draw too much blood, but enough to stain. Hannibal finds a low thrum of desire pulses through his gut when the shirt catches and pulls at the cuts to sting.

"*Well,*" Will heaves a sigh as he collects his own shirt from the dirt. "Thanks for changing your mind--" he pauses, glances over with a raised brow to where Hannibal is buttoning up his waistcoat. "--or have you?"

He can feel his lips twist into a smirk as he looks around for the tie that Will threw aside. He turns his attention back to the younger man, closing the already scant distance between them in a matter of steps. Once more he's surprised by Will's reaction--or lack thereof--as he brings a hand up to brush across his jaw, wrap around to thread into curls that are now slightly damp with sweat. He doesn't look or smell afraid, barely even warily hesitant; the shine in his eyes is pure curiosity. Hannibal finds he can relate.

"I think I can make an exception this time," he murmurs wryly, and Will's own lips twist into a smirk as he darts forward to place a chaste kiss to Hannibal's mouth before sliding away, glancing around them for his second shoe.

"That's a relief. 'Cuz you're not the mark I picked today. *And* you're a ridiculously good fuck. And while a nice spot of murder was on the menu for tonight anyways, I'm glad it's not my own." Will glances up as he dances into his shoe, grinning at Hannibal's stunned silence. "I know. I was just as surprised when an even bigger dickbag than you stopped by today to paint a target on his own back. Lucky you...*and* me, I guess. Hm."

He allows Will the luxury of being fully clothed and standing on his own two feet again for all of ten seconds before Hannibal is gripping sharp hips to push him back against the wall and ravaging his mouth. To his delight, Will meets the kiss with equal fervor, nipping at Hannibal's lips and fisting hands viciously in his hair to hold him close.

Hannibal can see this going the way it did not twenty minutes previous, and while desire coils molten hot in his gut at the prospect he knows that his cock is not yet up for the event, so he breaks their kiss with a gasp.

"It seems my own schedule has been cleared this evening," he rasps against Will's plush, wet, kiss-bruised lips. "Do you need a hand?"

Will Graham's very kissable lips twist into a grin.

Chapter 2

Chapter Summary

Will and Hannibal do fun murdery things, and then even more fun sexy things.

Chapter Notes

So, on what was meant to be a one-shot, the first comment placed by user dancy_85 (I don't know how to do linky things on here, sorry!) mentioned something about carney Will putting himself through school and I started thinking about what kind of backstory would see Will is this situation and then more story kind of unfolded before me. Plus, who doesn't want to read about Murder Husbands and sexy times? This chapter practically wrote itself.

Somehow, there is at least one more third bit that has presented itself to finish this off, though the way my thoughts are going there may be actual plot that could happen and extend this AU. Had I known this was a possibility I would have named this fic something a bit more clever or deep than 'Ball Toss' smh.

Hannibal waits a few minutes for Will to finish up shutting down his booth, something uncharacteristically akin to anticipation, perhaps excitement, buzzing low in his belly. He stands stoically near the back entrance to the booth as the operator shuffles around the front window and takes down the hanging prizes to store them more securely for the evening. He can't help but wet his lips as his eyes flit about the man, appreciating his backside greatly as he turns away from Hannibal and bends over to collect his lockbox.

"How do you work?" he breaks the silence finally, though it was neither stifling nor uncomfortable. His curiosity is too great.

Will gives a halfhearted shrug as he glances around the space once more to ensure everything is in order. "However I need to. I'm not picky. It helps to be flexible, to avoid leaving a pattern," he turns to Hannibal with a grin. "I can hardly have someone catching on that someone turns up dead every weekend our carnival is in town."

The edges of Hannibal's lips twitch upwards. "I can see how that would be problematic."

"You too though, right? I mean especially for working in the same area as your homestead?"

“I prefer to take a different approach,” is all that Hannibal offers in response. Will must catch on to his meaning because he turns back to Hannibal with a quirked brow, studying him as best he can in the darkness of the closed up booth. After a moment, he lets out a low whistle and gives a nod with a huff of amusement.

“Bold.”

“I find that it keeps things interesting,” Hannibal expands. “How do you choose them?”

Another soft huff of amusement as Will saunters closer, lips spread in a cheeky grin. “Same way you do, it seems,” he purrs as he gives a soft tug to Hannibal’s rumpled and dirt-stained lapels. “I don’t like assholes.” When Hannibal gives him a pointed look, Will shrugs. “Call me a hypocrite.”

He kills the rude; Hannibal may fall in love.

His eyes have finally adjusted to the darkness, so he can see the way Will’s stormy blue eyes flash with something that is somehow equal parts mischievous and sinister. As practiced as he is at masking his thoughts and emotions, Hannibal can’t help but wonder if he’d just let something slip; something that Will gleaned with startling quickness and efficiency. It seems he has a difficult time reigning himself in when it comes to the young man in front of him.

“And how do you find these marks again, once they are chosen? You can hardly scamper off after them and leave your booth unattended.”

Will doesn’t break the eye contact between them, pats the walkie-talkie strapped to the waist of his jeans; Hannibal is slightly disconcerted he hadn’t previously noticed it. “A mutually beneficial arrangement with another worker,” he explains, reaching into his back pocket to pull out a black leather wallet, offers it over to Hannibal who sates his curiosity immediately by opening it up to examine the contents. “He keeps the cash, I keep the cards. He doesn’t know that the only card I’m interested in the license.” Hannibal pulls the aforementioned piece of plastic out to see who Will has picked today.

Alexander Tomber, aged thirty-two (permanently, after this evening), six feet two inches and weighing in at 213 pounds. Hannibal would bet that when Mr. Tomber wasn’t happy with Will’s game he had attempted (unsuccessfully) to use his size to intimidate the game master. He considers the man’s size and weight for a moment, mentally calculating how deficient the serum in his pocket will be since it had been prepared for Will, who is much slighter. It will still take him down, though not for nearly as long; long enough to transport him, Hannibal is sure, as he looks to live in a neighborhood only twenty minutes from his own. His eyes scan the license over one more time before he hands it back to Will, a small, private smile quirking his lips.

Wouldn’t you know it, Mr. Tomber is an organ donor.

“We may as well take my car,” Hannibal informs him when it seems that Will is all set to go. “It’s parked just out back and already prepared for transportation.”

He turns to lead the way as Will lets out a soft snicker at that. This boy seems to be quite cavalier about running off with Hannibal after being explicitly told that his own neck was on the chopping block not one hour previous. He is either unconcerned for his well-being or vastly overconfident in his abilities; both considerations are equally interesting to Hannibal.

When they reach the car, Will lets out another snort of laughter and mutters lowly to himself something that sounds suspiciously like: 'a fucking Bentley', but otherwise refrains from commenting as he slides into the passenger seat.

Hannibal had noted the address as he studied their victim's license and heads in the direction of the appropriate neighborhood. With any luck this Sunday night will find the man at home and his procurement easy. They drive in silence for several minutes before Hannibal finally speaks. "Tell me, Will Graham, how does one come to find themselves a cog in the machinations of a travelling carnival?"

Will snorts at that, perhaps at the flowery presentation of his question; it was a much more polite way of asking how one becomes a transient carney, after all.

"My father took ill when I was sixteen. I had myself emancipated by seventeen before he finally passed. I couldn't stand the thought of being a warden of the state, even for only a year." Will shifts in his seat, rubs his hands up and down his thighs restlessly. "It seemed a bit like fate, really. The weekend the carnival was in town was the weekend before the rent that I couldn't pay was due. I signed a contract to come on as a sanitation worker and sold whatever possible in two days, packed up what I could carry with me and left. Been on the move ever since."

"And you worked your way up from sanitation to running a game booth," Hannibal notes.

Will gives a soft huff at that. "It pays a hell of a lot more to run your own stand than to pick up litter--if you can hack it. Turns out, I know exactly how to play a crowd."

He twists his head then, to flash Hannibal a conspiratorial sort of smile. Hannibal does not doubt him in the least; he suddenly feels very thoroughly played. Yet still he longs to run his fingers through those unruly curls, press his mouth against pink lips both soft and demanding… Without intention or warning his thoughts shift with new information overlaid, and suddenly he can see the beauty next to him panting with exertion, pupils dilated from excitement and pleasure, painted red in the thick, dripping blood of his kill…

Hannibal shifts slightly in his seat, willing away the arousal that has shivered so suddenly through his every nerve. He clears his throat. "Do you find this lifestyle suits you?" When Will remains silent for a moment he amends, "I mean no offense, I am only curious. I understand that there is a sort that are fulfilled by constant upheaval, by always having the option to experience new places and people. ...Do you never dream of something more permanent?"

"I do, actually," Will returns softly after a long stretch of silence. "This is fine, it works for me. But I know I could do more. *Be* more. The first thing I did after settling into the carnival was begin working toward my GED. It didn't take long...I was always pretty quick on the

uptake when it came to school stuff. I've been taking online courses the last few years, when the time allows. It's slower, to get a degree that way, but it's effort towards it all the same."

Against his better judgement, against every instinct and past inclination, Hannibal finds his heart warming for the boy next to him. "What do you study?"

In his peripheral vision he can see Will's mischievous grin, though he could have discerned his mood by the sound of amusement in his voice alone. "Criminal justice. Forensics. Psychology of Behavioral Analysis."

Hannibal can't hope to quell the laugh that bubbles up from his chest. "You wish to catch killers?"

He glances over then, in time to see Will's head roll to the side to meet his gaze. Determined, confident, just the right amount of cocky. "Only the inferior ones."

Yes. It is very likely indeed that Hannibal may fall in love.

They make a pass by Mr. Tomber's place of residence and find that at least one occupant is, in fact, at home. With any luck this gem of a human being Will has deigned fit to kill holds residence here alone. Fate does seem to be on their side, at least a little, when they find that there is a quite convenient alleyway that borders the back of their prey's property. Hannibal kills the lights early and then creeps into position silently before killing the engine. The hour is late, and a glance around shows only darkness in most of the surrounding homes.

Hannibal finds it humorous, though not surprising, that the both of them are prepared enough to pull on a set of gloves before they attempt to breach the house. As they approach the back door Will is quick to retrieve a bundle of cloth from his pocket that sleeves a set of lockpicks. He has them inside in less than a minute and Hannibal can't help but begin to imagine working as a pair more often. So far it seems the young man can hold his own, though he has yet to face Hannibal's greatest test. When they get their mark back to Hannibal's basement, strapped down and conscious and a blank canvas for all of his favorite tools...*then* he will see what this fledgling killer is made of--for anyone his age compared to Hannibal's can only hope to be considered a fledgling.

They creep in through a dark kitchen, drawn to the next room--which appears to be the living area--by an obnoxiously loud television set. Luck remains on their side as they find themselves facing said TV, the sole occupant and the reason for their visit nestled lazily in a recliner facing away from them. He doesn't appear to be asleep, though by the near half-dozen beer bottles littered around the side table next to his chair Hannibal can guess that he's not completely present.

Will holds back, as Hannibal had asked him to before they left the car, and the older man has no trouble at all slipping up behind the recliner and jabbing the needle retrieved from his pocket into the man's thick neck. The poor sod can barely react at all before the drugs begin to take effect and he slumps boneless into the foul-smelling, sweat-soaked La-Z-Boy that holds him.

A glance to his side finds Will studying him intently, his features of mixture of curiosity and arousal. “You prepared that for me,” it is not a question, but a statement. “When you came for me.”

“Yes,” Hannibal answers easily, because it is hardly a fact that can be denied or refuted.

Will jerks his head toward their sleeping prey. “He’s much bigger than me. It won’t be as effective.”

His lips pull into a grin of their own accord. He may be a fledgling compared to Hannibal, but it seems this boy at least has decent sense and intuition. “Then we must work quickly,” is all that Hannibal offers in response.

It’s easy enough to haul out the brute between the two of them, though there is a slight moment of uncertainty in which Hannibal begins to doubt that he will fit in the trunk. In the end, they squeeze him in and a new sort of silent tension begins to build between them as Hannibal heads for home.

He half-expects another muttered comment from Will when he spots the property they pull into, but the boy remains wide-eyed but silent. He does, however, let out a delighted laugh when Hannibal leads him to the basement and turns on the lights.

“What a set-up!” He voices his approval and immediately begins a turn around the room to poke with curiosity into some of the cabinets. Hannibal allows this, though any other time he would find the invasion of his personal space quite rude; with Will it is somehow only endearing. “I guess this is one of the pros of being stationary, huh?”

“We should retrieve our guest from the car, Will,” Hannibal advises, tells himself that he is not forcing back a smile at the young man’s delight.

It takes considerably more effort to get their guest down the stairs, effort which Will calls attention to with each strained, muttered curse. The young man heaves a sigh and drops his end of the body as soon as they are off the stairs, prodding the man with a halfhearted kick to his middle. “Jesus, what a tub.” He arches his back and lets out a low, pleasant groan as the action spurs a series of pops and cracks down his spine.

“You act as though you’ve never done this before,” Hannibal chides him, earns a small huff for his efforts.

“I’m not really in the habit of *moving* them. I’m more of a leave-em-where-they-drop kinda guy.”

Hannibal gives a low hum, stepping around the ‘tub’ on the ground to place himself behind Will; his hands grasp the young man’s hips before he can think twice about it. “Then I look forward to broadening your horizons,” he purrs into the soft curls at the nape of his neck; he’s pleased by the tremble he can feel shiver through the boy’s body. “What would you like to do with him?”

Will gives a small shrug, leans back against Hannibal's solid form behind him. It feels intimate, to be pressed to each other while they regard the soon-to-be-dead man before them, as though they have done this together for years.

"We're in your territory, I'll defer to you," it's potentially the most respectful thing Will has done since Hannibal met him.

The phantom image of Will dripping with blood passes through Hannibal's mind once again and he doesn't hesitate to take the opportunity to make it a reality. "I would see you bathed in his blood," he murmurs against Will's ear, elicits another delicious shiver from the man.

Will pulls out of his grasp then, turning a quirked eyebrow and wry smirk upon him. "What a romantic you've turned out to be," he purrs playfully. "The hook then?" He jerks his head to the thick metal hook that hangs above the drain in the floor.

Hannibal retrieves a pair of handcuffs and positions Mr. Tomber's arms above his head. Will helps him haul the man up to suspend him from the hook and then steps back, eyeing the scene with contemplation. After a moment he gives a soft sigh, begins unbuttoning his shirt. As if he can feel Hannibal's eyes upon him, he gives a huff and starts on his pants. "It's not as if I've brought a change of clothes."

Unconventional, but Hannibal can summon no complaint about this turn. Instead, the mention of clothing reminds him that their guest should be relieved of his as well; it will certainly make harvesting from him much easier. He plucks up the of trauma shears he had set out earlier that evening--intended to cut the clothing from the man now willingly removing them, ironically enough--and makes short work of the stained jeans and sweaty t-shirt on the man hanging out for them. He places the shredded garments in a bag to be incinerated later and when he turns around again, his heart stills.

Will is unabashedly nude, his pale, lithe form on display and *much* easier to appreciate with actual lighting. The creamy expanse of his skin is broken only sparsely by soft, dark hair; barely a dusting on his chest, that tempting trail that Hannibal's hands had glided over earlier dipping down to a pubic region that appears fairly well-groomed. There are a litany of scars that litter his perfect flesh, a mix of aged, white lines and raised, pink puckers. Hannibal's dark eyes take in every mark with a greedy envy, the possessive beast within him longing to claim every existing flaw and make it one of his own. When he sees the scalpel in Will's hand, hanging casually at his side, Hannibal's lungs join his heart in inactivity.

Will had stashed his clothing at a safe distance, retrieved the scalpel from the tray near the stainless steel table meant for him, and now saunters back over to Mr. Tomber. His lips are parted to reveal a pink tongue pressed to the tip of one of his pearly white incisors, and a thrum of desire twists warmly in Hannibal's gut when he realizes that they seem slightly more pointed than the average person's; he can't help but wonder at how they would feel sinking into his flesh in the heat of passion. He comes to stand before the hanging man with his arms crossed, head tilted to the side. Apart from the anticipatory bloodlust that glints in his eyes, he looks wholly bored with the situation.

Will purses his lips, his dark brows furrowed. "Thought he'd maybe be awake by now. Seems a little anticlimactic," he admits. Hannibal agrees, though he doesn't voice his opinion.

Perhaps the alcohol in the man's system had increased the effects of his serum. Without another word on the matter, Will strides forward and sweeps the scalpel across his prey's throat. Hannibal barely has time to take a step to the side before the burst of blood from the severed carotid spews forth.

Will does not move. As requested, Will allows the hot blood to paint his naked body in messy stripes, taking care only to close his eyes and mouth as he lets the red run down him. The chaotic, scarlet splatters that cross Will's creamy flesh is reminiscent of a Pollock, and Hannibal can't help but note that it's the second time that evening that he has compared the scruffy young man to a work of art. When Tomber's blood begins to flow down his body rather than gush outward, Will turns around to face Hannibal.

He holds one hand up, contemplating the mess upon it as though he had never before seen the color red, and then turns to Hannibal with that quirked eyebrow that seems to be a signature of his. Half of his face took a direct hit and his tongue darts out to clean his lips of the blood spatter reflexively. "Is this what you wanted?"

Hannibal closes the distance between them in three short strides, fists his hands in hair that is partially dirtied with blood, and hauls Will's mouth to his own. Will returns the kiss enthusiastically, pressing close to Hannibal to further ruin his rumpled, dirt-covered suit. Hannibal finds that he doesn't mind this in the least--it wasn't a particularly favorite piece of his anyway. He finds the strength to pull away from Will's sweet mouth, trailing nips and kisses along his bloodied, scruffy jaw.

"Ruin me," Will demands in a needy moan, and Hannibal is finally able to tear himself away from the man that could very well be temptation incarnate.

The hands that had found their way down to sharp hips tighten as Hannibal guides Will backwards, toward the table that had been intended to usher him into his final rest. When Will's back meets the cold steel, Hannibal hauls him up to sit upon it. "Stay," he breathes, though Will is showing no desire to do otherwise; he pulls away to dig into one of his cabinets, retrieving a tube of surgical lubricant and returning to push it into Will's hands.

He allows one more brief, biting kiss before pulling away once more. "There's still work to be done. Why don't you get yourself ready for me until then, hm?"

"Should I watch you?" his tone is soft, breathless; Hannibal gets the sense that Will is not often given orders in such a way.

Hannibal flashes him a reassuring smile as he retrieves the steel bowl from the prep table next to them. "If you wish," he responds airily, then turns his back on Will to focus on the task at hand. It would be foolish to let the whole of the man go to waste, though Hannibal finds that he, quite uncharacteristically, lacks the patience to do a very thorough job of butchering the pig before him.

He retrieves the scalpel Will had dropped to the floor and slices down the torso with a quick and practiced hand. He extracts both kidneys, depositing them into the dish at his feet, and is working at the liver when Will speaks behind him.

“Why--why are you taking the organs?” he asks, and Hannibal can hear the hitch in his voice, can smell the rising arousal wafting towards him, and knows that Will is performing the task given to him.

Hannibal resists glancing behind him, knowing somehow that if he sees Will spread wanton on the table, working himself open with his own fingers, he will be so distracted that the pig in front of him will go to complete waste. “Why do you think?” he asks instead.

A soft, shaky chuckle, and then: “You’re that one, aren’t you? The killer that does those incredible displays. The...the Ripper. He--” a short, sharp gasp, a new wave of scent as precum leaks from his lover's cock; Hannibal suspects Will just managed to get his prostate. “He always takes organs.”

“Do not come, Will,” is all the answer Hannibal provides him. Behind him, Will gives a soft squeak of dismay. Hannibal had considered relieving Mr. Tomber of a few more of his now-unneeded parts, but finds suddenly that patience seems to be eluding him once again. He makes quick work of sealing up the ones he took and storing them in the downstairs fridge. He then removes the corpse from the hook and drags it halfheartedly into the freezer for quick storage, taking an extra moment to undo the handcuffs around the wrists. He will have quite a mess to clean up later on--this is entirely against Hannibal’s protocol--but he finds with more conviction every passing minute that he does not care.

He can feel Will’s gaze on him as he saunters back over to the hanging hook, knows somehow when his eyes travel down to the cuffs dangling in Hannibal’s grasp. “Here,” he commands simply, is privately delighted when Will obeys without question or fuss.

He moves to stand in front of Hannibal, panting with need and anticipation; his lovely cock is swollen and leaking already, the scent of his arousal pouring off of him in waves. He makes no attempt to protest or stop Hannibal as the handcuffs are slapped onto his wrists; his body is pliant when Hannibal raises his arms above his head and lifts him just enough to secure him to the hook that had held their prey not five minutes prior. When he has been properly incapacitated, Hannibal steps back to admire the boy.

The blood is drying, growing tacky on Will’s creamy flesh. Hannibal removes his jacket, waistcoat, lets them fall to the ground at his feet. He loosens the tie around his neck, allowing his gaze to travel the long, taut length of the offering before him; he notes hands that are delicate but strong, thighs thick and firm as his shirt joins the mess on the floor. When he steps out of his trousers, he pulls his gaze back up to the boy’s face.

Will stares back, his features an incomprehensible mash of lust and excitement and impatience. Hannibal is pleased when his observations of the boy’s demeanor indicates that though it is likely he has never before done something such as this, there is no fear, no hesitation.

Bold, sassy thing. Hannibal can’t wait to make good on Will’s demand to ruin him. He wants to take his time with this, draw out the anticipation, but he longs to be back inside Will even more, so his movements are slightly rushed as he strides over to the table Will had abandoned and collects some of the lube to slick up his cock with slow, teasing strokes as he steps back over to his offering.

Will braces his wrists against the hook, tenses his core to raise his legs to wrap around Hannibal's hips when he gets close enough. Hannibal leans in to suck away the drying blood from one pert nipple. "Good boy," he purrs against Will's flesh as his hands find the boy's hips to help stabilize him.

Will sucks in a sharp breath, releasing it just as quickly in a pained moan. "Don't--don't do that--I'll come," his warning is more of a whine. Well that *is* interesting. It seems this lovely boy has a bit of a praise kink; Hannibal notes it for future reference.

Hannibal raises his chin to brush his bloody lips across Will's. "Poor, needy thing. Take your pleasure whenever you like, but know this: if you come, I will not stop until my own needs are sated, no matter how sensitive or painful it turns for you." He lowers a hand between them as he speaks to brush his cockhead across Will's slick hole.

Will whimpers, his head falling back. "Oh please--fuck--*please--"*

It's all Hannibal needs; he's not completely heartless, after all. He thrusts up into Will in one smooth stroke, unyielding until he can advance no further. Their moans mingle in the air simultaneously and Hannibal could not say which sound was pulled from whose throat. He had thought that taking Will dry, rough and unprepared had been pleasant; sliding into Will with no resistance is like coming home and ascending to another plane of existence altogether. He enjoys the sensation so much that he immediately pulls out almost entirely to repeat it, pulling another delicious, ragged moan from Will.

"So good," he murmurs against Will's blood-painted chest as his hips settle into a pleasing rhythm, eliciting another gasp. Every time he sinks into the hot, silken channel, Hannibal feels as though he could topple right over into his release. With astounding self-restraint he holds back, keeps his thrusts steady, teasing, deliberately angling himself to brush *just* near Will's prostate without actually stimulating it.

"H-*Hannibal,*" Will pleads, and Hannibal's earlier assumption had been correct: hearing Will moan his name is incomprehensibly satisfying.

"Do you want to come, darling?" Hannibal grunts into his neck, where he had been lacing more bruising kisses. Will can only nod fervently in response. "Shall we succumb together?" he asks; another broken sob in answer. Hannibal's thrusts gain speed, force. He uses his grip on Will's lovely thighs to tilt him just so, fucking into him with abandon and meeting his prostate with every pass. "You've done so well, waiting for me," Hannibal praises, though he's not entirely sure Will can hear him over the cries spewing forth from his own throat. "Now, be a good boy and come for me," Hannibal instructs, and Will *must* hear that, because he gives one more ragged cry and clenches beautifully around Hannibal's cock as his release paints his chest for the second time that night.

Hannibal follows immediately after, stilling deep inside the boy and moaning low into the tender flesh of his throat as every ounce of seed is coaxed out of him. Will's legs are wrapped around his waist like a snake squeezing the life from its prey and Hannibal marvels that he still has feeling at all in his legs. He runs his hands soothingly across Will's thighs, down his legs, easing the boy away from him. "That's it," he murmurs against Will's racing pulse point. He attempts to keep his tone soothing, reassuring, though he's dubious as to the effect

when he himself is panting so hard that it's difficult to form sentences. "Let go, darling, I've got you," he urges softly.

As if he were awaiting permission, Will falls completely lax in his grasp, his legs sliding from their grip around Hannibal to place the full weight of his body on his strained arms once more. Hannibal doesn't let him linger, hoisting him up and off of the hook promptly. Will's feet meet the ground, but his bound wrists find their way around Hannibal's neck. He can feel every trembling muscle of abused arms vibrate against his shoulders as Will suddenly sinks forward into him, sealing their mouths together in a breathless yet passionate kiss.

When they break apart, Hannibal gazes down at the thoroughly fucked-out boy fondly, an unnameable emotion expanding almost uncomfortably in his chest.

"I think it is high time for a nice bath, yes?" he suggests. He tries not to think about the way his throat tightens when Will can only nod his agreement with a blissful grogginess.

Chapter 3

Chapter Summary

Will and Hanni clean up; Hannibal has a proposition for Will.

Chapter Notes

Yes, I know I keep upping the chapter count every time I upload. No, I'm not entirely certain I will be done with this after a fourth chapter.

So. This story took a LEFT. TURN. I don't know what happened. Sometimes I get into the flow of writing without a proper plan in place (since this was only meant to be a one-shot anyways) and these idiots just tend to do whatever the hell they want, so...This is where we've ended up.

I should have mentioned at the start of the story (though never really thought it mattered much at that point): Will is 29 in this story, Hannibal in his early 40s so there is still a fairly significant age gap between them. This chapter and the next will be from Will's POV because apparently that's what happened as I started writing this bit.

Once the cuffs have been removed, Will allows Hannibal to scoop him up and carry him into the upper levels of the house. Though, he's just had his cognitive abilities and most of his motor function fucked out of him, so he has little choice in the matter, really. When he curls a little closer into the comforting warmth of the solid chest he's held against, Will lets himself believe that he's only seeking stability in this vulnerable position. He doesn't bother attempting to take in the details of the house he's drifting through, his mind still clouded with the fog of his recent climax, but when the man transporting him sets him down in the middle of a lavish bathroom, Will's attention snaps immediately to the mirror in front of him.

He's a mess, covered in tacky blood and come. His hair is limp with sweat and blood, some of the curls plastered to his forehead. He can feel more than see the result of Hannibal having found his own release inside him--now that he's standing upright again it has begun its decent down his thighs. He can't imagine what Hannibal found erotic about the sight of him like this--he looks like he's wallowed in blood like a pig in mud. *Hannibal*, though…

Will can study his reflection in the mirror without returned scrutiny as the man moves about the tiled room to draw a bath. He's all hard, long lines, and *sharp*; sharp nose, sharp cheekbones, sharp hips (though there *does* exist, in his midsection, a slight padding that Will finds just as alluring as the coarse hair that covers his chest). He can see strength rippling just

under his skin, in his arms and legs especially; a strength that seems slightly less than human. His flesh is also painted with blotches of crimson--his chest and hips where they pressed together, his jaw and chin where he nuzzled into Will's neck, along his low back and perfect ass where Will's legs had clutched around him--though he looks decidedly better wearing it than Will does.

His heart lurches when the reflection of Hannibal's gaze meets his, begins again at double-time when sensual lips twist into a slight smirk and he prowls over to where Will is standing (where he's *been* standing since being released from the man's arms).

"Come," he beckons softly, grasping Will's wrist (gently, a thumb brushing soothingly over the deep marks the strain of the cuffs had left on it). He tugs him along not toward the tub, but to the shower stall in the corner. "We must rinse off, first."

Will allows himself to be guided, aware that he is being unusually pliant but unable to determine exactly why or move to combat the instinct. He is lucky that Hannibal's hands had found his hips as they entered the stall, because Will nearly melts to the floor immediately under the hot stream of water; instead he sinks back into the body behind him with a sigh, bites back a moan as those deft hands travel up to scrub away the mess plastered to his torso. After a few minutes they ascend even higher, and he *does* moan when long fingers brush through his soaked curls, rub tenderly against his scalp to lather his hair with something that smells exotic, citrusy, and feels much higher quality than the two-in-one that his hair is usually subjected to.

After his head is guided to tip back and the lather rinsed from his hair, Will is surprised to feel a soft, soapy loofa dragged across his back, down his rump and upper thighs, brushing teasingly against his hole and crack as it's brought back up and around his front to work more thoroughly at the mess on his chest. He's about to ask what the point of the bath is at all, if Hannibal insists on going through this entire routine before they even make it there, but then a second soapy hand reaches around his front to grasp his flaccid cock. When Hannibal gives it a gentle, teasing stroke, Will's head falls back against his shoulder with a low moan.

"I don't…" Damned if he doesn't even want to say it, for want of that warm, slick grip to never leave him. "I don't think I can again," he pants. He tries to remind himself, when he begins to feel self-conscious over the admittance, that he has already been brought to orgasm twice in a matter of hours, and it's perfectly reasonable to have a refractory period, much as he loathes biology for it at the moment.

He can feel the rumble of a responding chuckle from Hannibal against his back, a puff of breath hot at his ear, and if Will had been capable of coming again, he is certain that is what would have done it. Hannibal doesn't comment on that, only fondles him a moment more before drawing away to let the soap be rinsed from Will's body. He stands in a sort of trance under the water for a moment before the stream disappears and Hannibal ushers him back out, dripping across the floor as he's guided to the clawfoot bathtub.

They sink into the water and Hannibal arranges them so that he is resting against the back of the tub with Will settled between his legs, laying back against his chest. Hannibal's hands find his neck, shoulders, upper arms, kneading at the muscles sore and strained from being hung out on the hook.

Will lets out a soft sigh. “S’good,” he murmurs, stretching and flexing his legs as Hannibal sees to his upper body. He focuses on deep, even breaths, willing his muscles to soak in the heat and relax. He rests his head back against Hannibal’s chest and his eyes are just beginning to grow heavy when the man behind him finally speaks.

“Stay,” he murmurs as one hand finds its way to stroke through Will’s damp curls.

Will huffs out a soft laugh at that. “Well, yeah. Not in a rush to hail a cab back to that shitty little motel at three in the morning.”

“Stay in Baltimore,” Hannibal elaborates; reminds Will in three words why he doesn’t usually do this, doesn’t go off with strangers or let himself get comfortable with people. People are boringly predictable, until their not.

“And what would I do in Baltimore?” Will asks, though he’s fairly certain the answer is going to be something akin to beginning a relationship.

“Go to school,” Hannibal replies easily. “You could finish faster if you go full-time, take classes in earnest. You could go to Quantico; it’s close.”

Will smiles at that; it’s a deceptively simple and sweet idea, and in no way seems appropriate tumbling from the mouth of the cold-blooded killer behind him. “I can’t go to Quantico. I would never make it through the screening process.”

“Not even if you were cleared by a highly respected psychiatrist?” Hannibal questions. When Will makes a soft, inquisitive sound, he reaches around Will’s front to offer a hand to shake, though in this position Will can hardly accept it. “Dr. Hannibal Lecter, at your service,” he introduces himself smoothly, and Will realizes again that through everything they’d done the last several hours, Will hadn’t felt at all as if he didn't know the man beside (or inside) him.

A psychiatrist. Fucking figures.

Will ignores the hand, ignores the title, finds another hole in the suggestion to pick at. “In any case there’s still the predicament of having to work two or three jobs just to afford a place in this city, which would leave me with exactly as much time for my studies as I have right now.”

“In my scenario, you would stay here.”

He can feel himself stiffen at the suggestion, confusion and disbelief battling for control in his mind. He pulls away, turns to kneel between Hannibal’s legs so he can level the man with a gaze both skeptical and calculating. “Hm. Here I thought you were just a serial killer. I didn’t realize you were actually insane. Do your patients know?” When his only reply is a slightly quirked eyebrow, he continues. “I just learned your last name thirty seconds ago. We’ve known each other for all of twelve hours.”

Hannibal smiles at that, reaching out to grab Will’s hips and pulling him forward effortlessly to straddle his own; Will’s hands fall to the man’s chest for stability, but he doesn’t push

away. Once he is in place, Hannibal brings a hand up to pet along his jaw, draw his face ever closer. “And look how well we’re getting on,” he purrs.

Will snorts at that. “Six hours ago you wanted to kill me,” he points out. Hannibal ignores him.

“You would want for nothing. I could take care of you,” he murmurs against Will’s lips. “Let me,” he breathes, and before Will can voice a rebuttal, Hannibal seals their mouths together.

Will sinks into the kiss--can’t not--and for a moment he lets himself be consumed by the heat of the man beneath him, lets the fanciful thoughts dance around his head. He hasn’t relied on another person for over a decade--he’s not entirely sure he remembers how to anymore. But the thought that someone *wants* to--even if it’s a complete stranger--warms him in a way he can’t define. It’s a notion both tempting and terrifying--to ease the burden he has shouldered alone all these years by making himself so vulnerable to another person.

The typical term for an arrangement such as this flashes in neon through his mind, and Will breaks away with a chuckle. “You want to be my sugar daddy.”

The slight pout of Hannibal’s lips has Will tempted to lean down and capture them all over again. “I don’t know if I would phrase it quite that way,” he clips, and Will can’t help but smirk at his offense.

“Oh? How would *you* phrase it?”

“A mutually beneficial arrangement,” the phrase rolls off his tongue easily. “Wherein I provide you with the security of being supported and in turn am able to enjoy your companionship.”

Will quirks an eyebrow, his head tilting slightly in curiosity. “Would you buy me things?”

Hannibal gives a low hum at that. “Anything you need. Your texts for school, clothes...anything else you might want.”

Will grins at that, leans forward to brush their lips together. “That’s being a sugar daddy, Hannibal. Do you want me to call you ‘daddy’?” he poses the question in jest, though the moment the words leave his mouth a frisson of heat buzzes down his spine, pools in his gut.

A very unsophisticated *tch* sound leaves Hannibal’s mouth at the inquiry. “That would be entirely up to you.”

Will dips down to rest his forehead in the crook of Hannibal’s neck as a yawn rips through him and suddenly every ounce of his remaining energy seems to drain out of him. “Can we talk about this later? Take me to bed.”

Hannibal obliges. They climb out of the tub and dry off, Will rubbing his head vigorously to remove the excess water from his hair, and then Hannibal leads him out into the adjoining bedroom. He notes the path of red smears--not full prints but holding enough of a shape to know that’s what they are--trailing from the bathroom, through the bedroom, out to the hall.

They made quite a mess. He's pleased that Hannibal has ignored it long enough to see to cleaning up Will instead; somehow he's certain it is not in this man's nature to leave things out of place--especially incriminating things.

They settle into the nicest bed Will's body has ever had the pleasure to grace, slithering into sheets that probably cost as much as Will pays the company to keep his booth up every month. Without a thought he curls up against Hannibal as if they have done this a hundred times before, and the older man accepts him without comment, wrapping one strong arm around him to hold Will close to his chest. He rests his head in the crook of Hannibal's shoulder and within minutes they are breathing as one.

"Why do you want this?" Will asks softly; he's not sure if he's referring to the arrangement or himself.

Hannibal brings a hand up to brush gently through his hair. He's silent for a long moment as he does this before he finally answers. "I find that I've grown fond of you quite quickly. You present the opportunity for companionship that I never before believed existed for me. I am...unwilling to let that opportunity pass by without exploring the possibility."

Will lets that sink in for awhile, allowing the warmth of the body next to him--however foreign the feeling is--relax him into a state close to slumber. "You're lonely," he murmurs at long last. Hannibal had stopped messing with his hair by then, his arm wrapped around Will's back once more. The only indication that the man heard him at all was the slight increase of pressure in his grasp.

"I know the feeling," Will breathes, and then lets his heavy eyes slip shut and drifts off to sleep.

Will awakens feeling intensely refreshed and, strangely, completely aware of where he is. Perhaps he is so accustomed to travelling from motel to motel that the unfamiliar surroundings no longer faze him--though the quality of the mattress and sheets and, glancing around, the refined opulence of the room is certainly not on par with the type of place he usually inhabits.

He gives a great stretch and a groan, finds when he passes his hand over the area that the empty spot of bed beside him is cool, its occupant long departed. He lays on his back, limbs stretched out comfortably like a starfish and stares at the ceiling, going over events from the previous day in his mind.

He'd never had sex in his booth before. Hell, he'd never had sex in a place that could be deemed anywhere *close* to public. And then they had hunted together; another first for Will. To find a man that shared his values, that he had such an intense connection with, was unimaginable. And the *sex.* Christ on a cross, the best sex Will had ever had, and it was with a serial killer that got off on seeing him doused in blood, on having him chained up helplessly to be played with and fucked at his behest…

Will's cock begins to stir at the memory and he pushes down on the enthusiastic organ with the heel of his hand, willing the arousal away. Like it or not, this was about more than sex now. The older man had made him an offer last night; an offer that was forward and unexpected and completely puzzling to Will. Surely if he didn't mind the monetary investment he could just go out and buy who he wanted a night at a time--not that Hannibal seemed like the kind of person that would need to involve compensation at all; the man exuded sex and charm. Surely he was able to find a companion the old fashioned way with ease.

But he wanted Will. Made the offer to *Will.* Will, who still didn't understand what the man could possibly find so appealing about him.

That aside, going forward with the arrangement would upend his entire life. To leave the company...his home and family (however detached he generally kept himself from the rest of them, they *were* the closest thing to family to him) for the past twelve years… It was a terrifying concept, but perhaps it was time. Will was damn near thirty, and though he knows that he could easily continue on in the way that he has been, he had been beginning to wonder--before ever meeting Hannibal--if staying with the company was all that his life would be. Sure, he had taken online courses here and there as he found the time and money for them, but he never once sat down to think about what would happen *after* he got his degree, if he ever eventually did.

If he was ever going to leave, ever going to be something else, something *more,* he had to find the strength to take that first step. Hannibal--God knows why--was offering him an easy out. He could step away, truly focus on another path, and do so without the weight of supporting himself, without consequence.

At least, with as little consequence as there could be, tangling with a known serial killer. And cannibal, Will reminds himself as the image of Hannibal carving out their kill's organs drifted through his mind. Hannibal the cannibal. Will gives a snort of amusement at the thought; it was like something out of a novel.

He heaves a sigh, gives his limbs a final stretch and then sits up. He recalls leaving his clothing in the basement the previous night, but it looks as though his host had thought to lay out a bathrobe for him along the foot of the bed. He retreats to the en suite to relieve his bladder, doing a double-take when he catches his reflection in the mirror. He hadn't noticed the previous night, due to the blood that had seized his attention, but it appears as though his new friend has graced him with several love bites along the column of his neck. They are purple and red, tender when he draws his hand over them.

His first instinct is to be annoyed and he's confused when his emotions don't follow suit. Instead, a buzzing warmth vibrates low in his gut, a strange sense of security at having been claimed by someone wrapping suffocatingly around his lungs. He likes it, he realizes. He likes being claimed, the thought of belonging to someone--the thought that someone wants *him*--is so overwhelmingly against the fortress of solitude he has erected around himself for half his life that he doesn't quite know how to process it.

Perhaps the idea--this *arrangement*--has merit.

He saunters back into the bedroom and retrieves the slate-colored robe, slipping into the article; a soft groan rumbles from his throat as the material encompasses him. Cashmere, it must be, or something equally expensive and extravagant. Will has never been one to indulge in the finer things in life--mostly because he has been, for all intents and purposes, dirt poor for the majority of it, but also because he's simply never seen the point. Why spend $100 on a shirt that will only end up with motor grease on it? Why buy smart, Italian leather loafers when they would only be used to trounce through the mud? Designer clothes served no purpose in the bayou, nor any of the other backwater towns along the Mississippi that his father dragged him to in search of the next job.

He considers this house, the Bentley, the robe wrapped around him that was likely more than his entire wardrobe combined. He considers the man that owns these things, impeccable and refined he's sure, though Will has known him for less than a day. He obviously likes to surround himself with opulence; aesthetics seem quite important to him.

Perhaps Will is just one more pretty thing he would like to own.

He's beginning to have trouble seeing the downside of that.

He wanders out of the bedroom and down the stairs, following the warm scent of fresh food (the bloody footprints from the night before are no longer there to guide him). He finds Hannibal in the kitchen--roomy, state-of-the-art, pristine even for having multiple pans going on the stove--and is greeted with the flash of a warm smile before his attention is directed back to stirring the contents of one such pan.

"Good morning, Will. You have excellent timing; breakfast is nearly ready."

"Morning," he murmurs, spotting a glass contraption which looks to contain coffee on the far end of the island where Hannibal works. He crosses over to the machine--a thing that looks more akin to a science project than a coffee maker--and studies it for a moment with a tilt of his head before he spots the pour mechanism. An empty cup is sitting beside it and Will assumes it's for him, helps himself to a generous pour.

With both hands wrapped around the steaming mug, Will shifts his stance to lean his hip against the counter next to Hannibal at the stove top. "I've been thinking about your...proposal," Will tells him.

"Have you?" Hannibal responds mildly, as though he does not care one way or another Will's opinion on the matter. "What have you been thinking?" He dumps a pan of browned sausage into another containing scrambled eggs, fluffing the ingredients together lightly.

"I'm thinking this warrants a conversation better suited to a time when I haven't just been fucked into a coma and then woken up in a haze," he admits. He takes a sip of the rich, dark coffee. "Here's the thing-- *damn,* that's good--I have to go break down today. But I don't have to leave for the next location until tomorrow. I'd like to come back tonight, to discuss terms. If we were to go forward with this... *arrangement*...we would need to do so with precautions in place."

"Precautions," Hannibal echos with a curious hum.

“So I don’t lose my life when you lose your interest,” Will extrapolates.

Hannibal pulls the pan from the stove, moves over to dish out the contents onto a pair of plates with an amused smirk twisting his lips. “I doubt very much that that would happen, Will. To the dining room,” Hannibal nods Will in the right direction as he picks up the plates and then strides out of the kitchen.

Will follows him to the next room and takes a moment to study the herb wall before taking his seat across from Hannibal, setting his coffee down next to a glass that has already been filled with some kind of juice. He picks up the fork and spears a bit of sausage, has it halfway to his mouth before he pauses, eyes darting over to find Hannibal’s deep amber watching him intently. His heart pounds at the thought that crosses through his mind and finds his tongue thick when he thinks to ask, “Is this…?” he jerks his chin down to indicate the basement below them, to the man he killed and Hannibal butchered the night before.

Hannibal offers him a soft smile. “I’m afraid not. Sausage takes time to prepare, and I was quite busy cleaning up for much of the early morning hours. This is another I had on hand. Perfectly fresh, I assure you.”

Because the freshness of the person he was about to eat was absolutely Will’s concern.

He studies the chunk of meat speared on the fork tines. By the way it has been seasoned and cooked he wouldn’t be able to tell that it wasn’t just run-of-the-mill sausage were he none the wiser. A visceral, morbid curiosity twists in his gut, guides the fork the rest of the way to his mouth without conscious effort. His eyes slip shut as soon as his teeth sink in; it is by far the most delicious sausage he has ever eaten. He wonders if that’s a testament to Hannibal’s culinary skill or the mere fact that what he’s doing is so taboo it’s almost arousing. He stabs at another piece, adding to it a chunk of fluffy, scrambled egg and moans around the next mouthful.

Hannibal, pleased that he’s pleased, or perhaps just that he’s eating, turns his attention to his own plate with a self-satisfied smirk. Smug man. Will gets the sense that he has company over for dinner often; that he surrounds himself with acquaintances that swoon and fawn over his talent. That deduction only lends more credence to his request for true companionship; though Will has never attended a dinner party in his life, he could see how that sort of lifestyle, that sort of attention, could be intrinsically lonely. Especially for a man with hobbies as...*diverse* as Hannibal.

He’s already halfway through his plate, taking a break to scoop up some fresh fruit from the bowl between them, when he can finally form words. “This is delicious. Thank you.”

“It’s my pleasure, Will,” Hannibal returns, and Will believes that it genuinely is. “I would be happy to prepare yours for dinner, when you return this evening,” he offers.

Will thinks about eating the man that he killed the night previous and his gut clenches with a perverse desire. His lungs feel heavy in his chest at the prospect. “I would like that,” he agrees softly. His mouth feels very suddenly dry and he goes for the light pink juice--guava, as it turns out. He’s pleasantly surprised by the flavor, takes another immediate sip. “How long have you…” he gestures vaguely to the food before them.

Hannibal flashes him a toothy grin and Will's heart falters at the sight of the sharp, crooked things. He shifts in his chair when the blood pounds into his cock at the thought that those teeth--the teeth of a predator--had sunk into the vulnerable flesh of his neck several times the night before. He's annoyed at once at only having a robe for coverage; the garment does little to hide his arousal and even less to quell it, brushing teasingly soft against his sensitive areas as it does.

"For most of my life," Hannibal is answering, and Will blinks his attention back to the man across from him, seizes his mug to take a long gulp of hot coffee in an attempt to turn his mind to the more distracting sensation of the scalding liquid spilling down his throat. He nods to Will's empty plate. "You seem to have grown comfortable with the concept rather quickly."

Will leans back in his chair with an easy grin now that his body seems to be obeying him once again. "Well, I'm hardly one to turn down a free meal." He caps the statement with a conspiratorial wink to the man across from him, tries to ignore the flutter in his chest when the action pulls another soft smile from Hannibal.

"Please, allow me to drive you back to the grounds," he offers as he stands; Will follows suit. "I laundered your clothing earlier," he indicates for Will to follow him to the small laundry area off the other side of the kitchen.

Will accepts the bundle of clothing with a soft thanks, slipping from the robe and dressing in silence. Hannibal makes good on his offer to drop him off, and for a good portion of the drive they sit in silence. It is only when Hannibal makes the final turn down the long stretch of road that runs behind the grounds, where the employees park and where he had staked out Will's booth the night before, that Will speaks.

"You know, even if we decide to go forward with this, I'm under contract until the end of summer. I'm going to have to leave tomorrow regardless." He's not sure if he's trying to put Hannibal off or goad him into a reaction. Whatever he's looking for, Hannibal doesn't deliver.

He stares calmly forward, silent in a way that could almost indicate Will hadn't spoken at all. "Five weeks to build anticipation," he murmurs thoughtfully after a moment.

"Five weeks for you to change your mind," Will rejoins. And though it's mostly in jest, he finds his stomach sink with disappointment at the thought all the same.

Hannibal's lips twitch at that, so there-and-gone that Will would have missed it had he not been studying the older man intently. "Between the two of us I hardly think I'm the more likely candidate for that." The car rolls to a stop and he shifts into park. "We will discuss it more tonight."

"When you cook me dinner," Will reminds him, and Hannibal nods. Will unbuckles his seat belt but doesn't move otherwise, unsure of how to depart. Silently? With another thanks for the hospitality, for the help with the kill, for the best fucking he's ever received? "Your number--" he starts, reaching for the phone in his pocket when he realizes he has no hope of finding Hannibal's house on his own without an address.

“Is already programmed in your phone,” Hannibal finishes the sentence, flashing a sly smirk when Will quirks an eyebrow at that. He’s not sure he even wants to know how Hannibal managed to bypass the lock screen.

“I’ll text you for the address later, let you know my timeline.”

“Dinner is at seven,” Hannibal states definitively, in a tone that brooks no argument. Dinner is at seven so Will will be ready and there at seven o’clock. The command that’s not quite a command twists Will’s gut pleasantly. His tongue as well, it seems, for he finds he can only give a sharp nod in assent. He’s about to pull into action, reaching over to the door when Hannibal’s warm hand grasps his scruffy chin firmly and pulls him further into the car.

Their lips meet over the center console and Will sighs as that hand leaves his jaw, trails down the column of his neck to wrap loosely around the base of his throat. Not threatening, not tightening; simply indicating that he has not yet been dismissed. Hannibal slips his tongue through Will’s parted lips, deepening the kiss though it remains a lazy, languid thing between them.

Will is dizzy when they finally part and he finds that now he can no longer talk *or* breathe. When he climbs from the car it is onto legs that wobble like jelly. He takes a moment to gather himself, to ensure that when he walks away it is with a straight back and confident stride. He doesn’t look back to see if Hannibal is watching him depart.

Chapter 4

Chapter Summary

Will and Hannibal discuss terms over dinner, seal the deal in a most satisfying way.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Sweat collects along Will's brow, the back of his neck, his chest, beads and drips in all places until his flannel shirt sticks uncomfortably to each area it brushes against, smells no longer of the fresh (expensive) detergent of Hannibal's; only of dirt and musk. He heaves a sigh, taking a break from his task to give a great stretch in an attempt to work out the aching soreness that has collected in his back, neck and arms.

He's positive that certain activities the night previous are responsible for the extra tension gracing his shoulders and upper back. He still can't find the will to be annoyed about it.

He has done an admirable job concentrating on the work at hand, for the most part, but every now and then, for seemingly no reason at all, Will can feel the phantom sensation of lips at his throat, strong hands clutching his hips. He can smell the coppery tang of blood and the salty musk of come and rich, bitter, black coffee. He is busy enough to be distracted from the soreness of being fucked first dry, then hard--mostly. He pretends not to notice the occasional whiff of the lavender and cedarwood that had been added to steaming bath water, doesn't allow himself to recall or long for sure, confident fingers that knead away the tension from his body.

He does his work, packing up leftover prizes to return to the truck and disassembling his plywood walls, and does not think about Hannibal Lecter.

Mostly.

By early afternoon the sun is blazing down and there is no promise of relief from the few thin, wispy clouds that dot the startlingly blue sky. Will finally relents and strips off his shirt, using it to mop his forehead and neck before tossing it to the side to join the small pile of things that need to be taken out to his Volvo.

He heaves a sigh into the hot, humid air and pulls the phone from his back pocket. Despite his attention never being quite 100% on task, Will seems to be making pretty good time. He should be able to finish packing up in the next few hours and still have plenty of time to get in a shower at the motel before dinner. He tries to ignore the disappointment of having no new notifications.

Will chews on his lip for a moment, indecisive, and then decides all at once that it's probably time enough to shoot Hannibal an update. He opens his contacts list, tapping on the 'H' along the sidebar to skip down the list. He frowns; there is no 'Hannibal' listed in his phone. He swipes his thumb up to scroll down to 'L'. ...No Lecter either.

Something that Will definitely does *not* want to label as panic begins to build in his stomach. What if Hannibal had only *thought* he'd saved his number, and accidentally backed out without finishing the entry? Will would have no way of finding his address and no way of contacting him. He can feel his frown deepen at the thought, his eyebrows drawn down so tightly they nearly pulled together. It seems...a very unlikely oversight for someone like Hannibal.

Dr. Hannibal Lecter, at your service.

Will gives a huff. One more letter to check, then. He swipes his thumb down the length of screen to urge the list back to the top quickly, partially humored but mostly annoyed at his would-be paramour's ego. He nearly swallows his tongue when he gets to the top of the list. Hannibal had entered his number in the 'D' listing, alright.

Under 'Daddy'.

A fierce pulse of desire throbs low in his gut, his cheeks flaming hot for reasons that have nothing whatsoever to do with the weather. A nervy buzz collects at the base of his neck, elicits a violent shudder when it shoots down his spine. Christ, he had been joking about it but seeing it now, written out so blatantly… He is sure that it was something of a joke of Hannibal's as well, but Will finds himself stunned at how one five letter word is affecting him. He imagines saying it--not in jest--perhaps when asking Hannibal to buy him something, or begging Hannibal to go harder, faster, to make him come…

He's pulled from the reverie by two unwelcome things: the sudden influx of blood pooling to his dick, taking the liberty itself to harden without Will's permission, and the awareness that he is no longer alone.

"Hi, Will," the greeting comes just a heartbeat after Will realizes someone is there, and Will jerks his head up, attempts to stuff the phone back into his pocket without looking guilty about it.

His own greeting is edgy at best, what with most of his attention driven towards ensuring the thickening cock stuffed into his too-tight jeans isn't as noticeable as it feels. "Matthew, hey," he responds, hopes that the breathless quality in his voice is put to the exertion of breaking down in the stifling, humid heat.

"I came to see if you needed any help, but you seem to have everything well in hand," Matthew admits as he glances around, and Will tries to ignore the disappointment that colors the statement. His dark hair, though kept cropped short, is plastered to his forehead with sweat, same as Will's. He's less fortunate than Will in that he can do little more to combat the heat than walk about with his sanitation jumpsuit unzipped to halfway down his torso, displaying a toned chest and abdomen and a couple of curious tattoos that sit symmetrically along his lower ribs.

“Don’t you have to do your rounds?” Will inquires, grabbing up the clipboard with his checklist to keep his eyes occupied. He’s grateful that he has been saved the effort of having to reject Matthew’s help by his own proactive work ethic. He’s a nice enough kid (and he does feel like a kid to Will, even though he’s only four years the young man’s senior), and he’s been good to work with, but lately he’s become suffocatingly interested in Will. To the point where he’s been altering his sanitation routines to coincide with frequent pass-bys to Will’s joint.

How’s business today, Will?

Spot any good marks today, Will?

Hell of a day, huh, Will? Can’t wait to unwind with a beer. Got a six-pack waiting in my room…

The flirtations, the invitations, the glances from his dark, beady eyes that are both coy and calculating, they’ve all been escalating in a steady fashion. Will has done his best to skirt all of the above the best he can without spurning the kid. He doesn’t deserve to have his feelings hurt, after all, and he’s got more than a little dirt on Will to boot. He doesn’t even *realize* how much he has on Will. His own role of picking wallets and snatching cash could be easily rebuffed--cold hard cash can’t be tracked, after all. And while they could never pin any fraudulent charges to Will since he never actually messes with his marks’ credit cards and *always* disposes of their wallets properly, if they started connecting names to him...he’d likely be getting pinned with something much worse than credit card fraud.

It’s easier to keep Matthew happy so that doesn’t happen. Happy, but distant.

Matthew gives a halfhearted shrug at the reminder of his duties. “I’ve done enough passes for awhile. Not much else to do until they get everything out and we can do the final sweep…” his sentence trails, the last few words passing his lips a touch slower than normal, and when Will glances up from the clipboard in his hands he can tell immediately that Matthew’s gaze is trained upon the trail of bite marks flowing down his neck.

Will’s cheeks flame bright once again, and he deliberately does not think about the purple marks that have formed around his wrists from the handcuffs for fear that Matthew’s gaze will be drawn there next.

“How about some lunch, then, since it looks like we’re both about done? Get out of the heat--”

“Thanks, Matthew, but I can’t. I’m on a bit of a timetable so I need to keep going,” Will cuts the invitation short, wincing internally when it comes out sharper than he intended. As if to prove his point, he sets the clipboard down and moves to the last section of his booth that’s still connected and erect. He does *not* think about the irony of it being the same stretch of wall that Hannibal had pressed him up against to assault his mouth, used as a support when he hoisted Will up and fucked into him unprepared and unrestrained, told him that he wanted to kill him and made Will come so hard he saw stars…

“Plans?” the word is short, clipped, the one word response entirely unlike the speaker.

“Dinner,” Will offers over his shoulder, immediately wonders why he’s feeding the conversation at all.

“With Mr. Hickey?” Matthew shoots back, enough cold derision in his tone to halt Will’s hands.

He turns back to Matthew slowly, biting down on the urge to tell him that it’s none of his fucking business. Happy, but distant, he reminds himself. “It’s just some local,” he provides with a casual shrug, as though he and Matthew always discuss their sexual partners with each other. “It proved to be a fun night, and I’m not one to turn down a free meal.”

He resists the temptation to actually kick himself at the thoughtless utterance, purred so coyly at Hannibal only hours ago but now falling entirely flat with the stark reminder on the face of the man before him that Will has done just that to every one of Matthew’s advances.

Matthew must be feeling generous because he doesn’t call Will out on that fact. He merely gives a short nod, forces a grin in an attempt to appear casual and begins backing away. “Well, have fun with your townie, then. I’ll let you get back to it.”

He’s turned to walk away completely before Will can manage to patch together a reasonable reply.

Will heaves a sigh, drawing out his phone once more; desperate for a distraction now more than ever. With a sardonic smirk, he taps on the contact ‘Daddy’ and clicks the messaging icon to begin a new conversation thread.

Funny. He shoots off first in an attempt to convince both him and Hannibal that the contact entry has affected him in no way other than cursory amusement.

I’ll be finished here soon. Back to the motel to shower and then I’m all yours. Text me your address?

He has barely slipped the phone into his pocket before it’s buzzing for his attention. Will’s heart jumps at the quick response.

50 Bennington Lane. Check out of your room when you finish. You won’t be returning.

Will’s mouth goes dry at that, a heat that is becoming all too familiar coiling in his stomach. He can’t complain about the directive--Hannibal’s bed is certainly better than any respite he’d find at that fleabag motel with it’s lumpy mattress and barely-effective air conditioner, even if he will probably be getting very little sleep.

He considers all the ways he could respond to that; doesn’t, in the end. Instead, he gets back to work, eager as ever to get to that shower and whatever will come after it.

Due to sheer lack of necessity, Will does not own any dress clothes. In twelve years he has never once been bothered by this fact. Until now.

He stands in the musty motel room, on carpet torn and stained (by what, Will doesn't care to know), clad only in a towel. His hands rest on his hips as he contemplates the entirety of his wardrobe which has been dumped onto the lumpy mattress before him.

He chews at his bottom lip, staring at the mess of clothing before finally settling on a darker pair of jeans that are (somehow) free of holes. He goes for one of the only non-flannel button downs he owns, a rich shade of blue because it complements his eyes and it is the least wrinkled of the bunch.

Hopeless as it is, there is an attempt made at taming his mop of curls while they are still damp. Will eyes the scruff that covers his cheeks and chin, rubbing a hand over his jaw as he considers a shave. The idea is discarded quickly; there's no sense in dolling himself up, after all. He is going over there first and foremost to have a discussion. If that discussion goes well then ending up beneath Hannibal is likely a sure thing regardless of how he presents himself.

And if the discussion *doesn't* go so well… Well, no one will care if he's a clean shaven corpse.

He huffs a laugh at the thought when he considers that, in fact, he may be meeting with the only man that would.

His final consideration, as he begins plugging the address into his phone for guidance, is whether or not to stop off and pick up a bottle of wine. It would be the polite thing to do, but Will doesn't much give a fuck about being polite. In the end, he decides that, given the nature of the arrangement Hannibal is suggesting, it is an unnecessary expense. And, given that he knows absolutely nothing of the man's tastes (other than the obvious 'expensive'), he would hate to embarrass himself by presenting a bottle of something that is both cheap and a type Hannibal doesn't like.

In the end, he arrives back at the mansion of a house empty-handed at fifteen minutes to seven. The composure that he had worked so hard to build up in himself all day is swept away as soon as the door is opened to him.

Christ, but Hannibal is handsome. Devastatingly so in a burnt orange shirt and navy blue plaid vest. Even the tie, which on anyone else would be a hideous mish-mash of peacock and paisley, makes him look stunning. His ashen hair falls softly over his forehead, so unlike the way it was styled when he'd met him the previous afternoon with nary a lock out of place. The smile his lips twitch into when he greets Will, both coy and confident, is the final nail in the coffin that holds Will Graham's resolve.

Already he's fairly certain he knows how this conversation is going to end. Well, if he's going to go all-in he may as well act as though it was his idea. He straightens his spine as he saunters behind Hannibal into the kitchen.

His host returns to the island to stir something on the stove, indicates that Will should help himself to a glass of wine. Will does, taking a large sip of the red immediately in the hopes that a buzz will fuel his confidence. He's really more of a whiskey drinker, but he's pleasantly surprised by the rich flavor; just the right amount of subtle sweetness. He abandons his glass

on the island and strolls over to the other side, where Hannibal is still fussing over one of the pans.

He takes a slow, deep breath in through his nose, releasing it with a sigh. “Smells amazing,” he notes.

Hannibal, finally seemingly happy with the state of things, turns to Will and leans against the counter with a small, pleased smile.

Will’s tongue pushes out to wet his lips, chase the nutty aftertaste of the wine; he just manages to hold back his smirk when he sees amber eyes dart down to follow the movement. He advances casually until they are pressed together, chest to hips, and Will leans close to brush their lips together softly.

“What did you make me, Daddy?” he breathes, unsurprised now, after his discovery that afternoon, when his heart rate doubles upon uttering the word. Desire coils molten in his belly at the soft sound that falls from Hannibal’s lips before the man can reign himself in. He can control his sounds, but he can’t control the way his eyes darken in response. Will’s breath catches.

His hands find Will’s hips, grasp briefly and then pet up and down his sides. He gives a soft hum, dips his head to press their lips together once more, just a bit more firmly than Will had. “Something that will quickly grow cold if you continue on in this fashion,” Hannibal warns, gives a soft rumble of a growl when Will tilts his hips against him in response.

“Well, we wouldn’t want that,” Will relents, pulling away reluctantly. He allows Hannibal to see a flash of his smirk as he turns away, back to the guest’s side of the counter where his wine awaits him. He’s only just collected his glass when Hannibal directs him into the dining room. When he sees Hannibal’s hands occupied with their plates he takes up the half full wine glass near the stove and brings it along to place at Hannibal’s setting.

“A simple liver pate on a toasted crostini to start,” Hannibal explains as he eases the plate down in front of Will.

Will can’t help but smile at the unassuming appetizer, entirely certain that there is nothing *simple* about it. He plucks up the slice of bread and forces himself to take a delicate bite, though his instincts are telling him that the whole of the thing will fit in his mouth. “I can honestly say that this is the best pate I’ve ever had,” he notes.

“The only pate, you mean,” Hannibal rejoins, his eyes shining with an amused glint as he watches Will take another bite before turning to his own plate.

Will grins at that, caught and completely unsurprised to be. “Of all the liver I’ve eaten this is by far the most human,” he amends.

Hannibal gives a soft hum at that. “How fortunate that Mr. Tomber was able to serve a valuable purpose after all. Shame that he’ll never know.”

He pauses in reaching for his wine, lowers his hand as he studies the man across from him intently. “They really are just pigs to you, aren’t they? Good for nothing other than stocking your larder.”

“If they act as pigs, is it truly so unusual that I would treat them as such? Discourtesy is unspeakably ugly to me, and I cannot abide it,” Hannibal responds, pauses to flash his gaze over Will, “Usually.” Will lets out a huff of laughter at the accusation; he’s nowhere near oblivious (nor foolish) enough to attempt to argue it. Hannibal raises his wine glass to his mouth, takes a brief inhale as he swirls the liquid, and finally allows a sip to pass his lips. “It is my belief that, whenever feasible, one should eat the rude.”

Will can feel his lips pull into a smirk over the rim of wine glass he’d finally claimed. “Free range rude,” he quips softly before taking a sip, and that earns an honest-to-God smile from the killer across the table.

They finish the last bites of their crostinis and Hannibal collects their plates, excusing himself back to the kitchen to retrieve the main course. Will leans back in his chair as he waits, content with how the evening is going, though he knows that at some point they are going to be forced to discuss the reason Will returned in the first place. He mentally goes over the points and arguments he had framed in his head throughout the day as he’d worked and is glad to have done so when Hannibal returns and dives into the subject after a brief introduction of the kidneys in sherry sauce that is set before him.

“This morning you spoke of precautions to put in place, were we to move forward with my proposed arrangement,” Hannibal begins after Will has had his first bite and conveyed his enjoyment. “I would be interested to hear more of your thoughts on the matter.”

“How do I know you won’t kill me if one of us becomes displeased with this *arrangement*?” It’s rather blunt, but then Will supposes that they are speaking of him becoming something of a live-in fuck buddy for Hannibal, so bluntness has its place.

“We are both adults, Will. I am certain that, should we choose to part ways at one juncture or another, we can do so without it turning into a bloodbath.”

Will pulls a bite of creamy potatoes from his fork and considers this. He’s still not convinced, but he supposes that there is a level of trust that would need to run both ways. After all, there’s nothing stopping him from killing Hannibal either. “I want my own place,” he declares, moving onto the next issue.

To his credit, Hannibal doesn’t outwardly scoff. Will can tell he wants to from the way his shoulders tighten, lips pressed together at the suggestion. “No, you will remain here,” he states shortly. A beat. “You may have your own room.”

He bites back the instinctive urge to lash out at the denial, chewing on his lip as he thinks it over. “What if there’s a time when even the same house is too much?”

He watches as Hannibal considers the question, taking another indulgent sniff of his wine before taking a sip. “If it came to that,” he begins slowly, and Will can practically see the

gears turning over in his mind, “I would be amenable to putting you up in a hotel. Temporarily.”

“That’s impractical,” Will argues immediately.

“No more impractical than paying for an apartment you will rarely reside in,” Hannibal shoots back and Will watches as his case dies before he can truly plead it.

“Fine, I’ll stay here,” he relents grudgingly, stabbing at a piece of kidney for effect. He tries not to let his grousing disappear as soon at the bite meets his tongue; it really is a fantastic dish.

There’s a mounting silence for the span of several minutes wherein the both of them continue with their meal. When their plates are nearly bare, Hannibal speaks again.

“Was there anything else?”

Will gives a small sigh. He doesn’t even want to bring it up, but knows that he needs to--that they need to enter into this fully aware of each other if they are going to do it at all (or survive doing it; Will is still skeptical about that whole point). “I’m not accustomed to having things handed to me,” he states at long last.

Hannibal gives a knowing nod, somehow manages not to look like a dick doing it. “I imagine not.”

“I might…” Will sighs again. “I’m worried that it will make me uncomfortable.”

He’s surprised when Hannibal reaches across the table to grasp his hand. The touch is warm, comforting. “Would it help you to accept these things if you placed the burden of motive on myself?” When Will only blinks at the question, Hannibal gives a soft smile. “It would give me great pleasure to give you nice things.”

Heat flames in his cheeks immediately and Will ducks his head instinctively; his gut clenches fiercely, a low throb pulsing through his core down to his cock. “Seriously?” is all he can manage at that, and wants to wince at the bashful way the word falls from his lips.

“Absolutely,” Hannibal confirms. He sounds very sure.

“Veto,” Will blurts suddenly, provoking a confused blink from the man across from him. “I want veto power. Not...not on *everything.* Just...just on anything really big. Excessive.”

A pale eyebrow cocks at the suggestion. “I saw the Volvo you pulled up in. Is a new car considered excessive?”

Will chokes on his sip of wine, coughing into his elbow until the sting in his throat subsides. “Very,” he confirms with a croak.

Hannibal gives a disapproving hum at that, and he can see the gears working again--no doubt searching for a loophole to the rule. Will’s lips twitch into a frown at the thought, suddenly

positive that Hannibal wouldn't be above resorting to sabotage to see the end of his trusty Volvo.

Another moment of silence stretches between them wherein little is done by either of them except sitting and studying each other. As usual, Hannibal is the one to break it.

"Have we reached an agreement, then?" he inquires.

"I think so," Will admits with a slow nod. "...Do we shake on it?"

At the suggestion, a smirk curls over Hannibal's lips; slow, salacious. "Something like that."

Hannibal's form of sealing a deal, as it turns out, is a lot more enjoyable that a mere handshake.

Will follows him to the bedroom, his heart beating harder with every step that draws them closer. They begin to strip down when they arrive, and Will watches with mild amusement at the methodical (anal retentive, more like) way that Hannibal removes each piece, either folding it up or draping it across a chair in the corner with care. It seems he's much more fussy about the way he undresses when his suit hasn't been ruined by dirt and blood.

He finds himself mirroring Hannibal, laying his own clothes delicately on the chair closest to him. For reasons unknown, he is suddenly nervous; a twinge of amusement bursts in his chest when he glances at the bed and realizes that this will be the first time they actually have sex in one.

They turn to each other at the same time, each taking the other in with unhurried gazes. Will is already painfully hard at the promise of a good fucking, and he can see that Hannibal is there as well; his ruddy cock juts out, impressive and unapologetic. They step toward each other simultaneously as well, a magnetic pull drawing them together, stopping only when a hair's breadth remains between them.

Will stands still, his breath coming short, as Hannibal raises a hand to caress his jaw. "Beautiful," he murmurs, and Will can feel the flush flood his cheeks, preening at the compliment. Hannibal's hand slips into the curls at the base of Will's neck and tightens, his head dipping down to ghost his nose and lips along his jawline before trailing lower, down the column of his throat as he takes in a slow, deep breath. "You remind me of Saint Sebastian," he murmurs, and Will feels his cock throb insistently as even more blood diverts to it, though he has no idea who Saint Sebastian is. "I wonder," Hannibal pauses in his movements and hums, sucks a wet kiss to Will's pounding pulse point, "if your suffering would be just as breathtaking."

A moan catches and breaks in Will's throat as Hannibal shifts closer and their erections brush together. "Do you want to find out?" he pants, for lack of anything else to say. He doesn't know who Saint Sebastian is or how he suffered or why. All he knows is that if Hannibal wants to witness Will's suffering he would let him. Gladly.

Another contemplative hum buzzes across the tender flesh of his throat, followed by a soft brush of lips. “Another time, perhaps,” Hannibal breathes, and it sounds like a promise. He presses forward then, guiding Will backwards toward the bed, which he clambers onto as soon as his thighs hit the edge. Hannibal continues to follow until he’s got Will on his back, strategically positioned over him. His tongue presses out to wet his lips as he gazes down at him, and Will longs to taste it.

“Kiss me,” he demands on a sigh, and Hannibal complies, capturing first Will’s bottom lip with a sharp nip and then licking into his mouth when Will’s lips part with a sharp gasp. He moans as their tongues slide together, finally remembers that his hands are not bound this time and he can reach up to touch the man that presses him into the mattress.

And he does, everywhere. He glides along his torso, soft skin covering an undeniable strength. He clutches at the rug of hair across his chest that is somehow both soft and coarse, brings the other hand up to tangle into silky hair, urging Hannibal’s mouth to remain against his own. He parts his legs and Hannibal settles between them as if he’s home; Will lifts his ankles to wrap around firm calves, lock to forbid movement there as well. He arches against him, tilting his hips up to encourage the agonizing friction between them, their cocks rutting frantically in search of some form of relief. He can feel wetness against his stomach and has no idea if it’s from himself or Hannibal or a combination of the two of them.

“Fuck me,” Will whines between kisses. Hannibal’s breathless chuckle in response sends a full body shiver through Will.

“Patience, sweet thing,” he murmurs into Will’s ear, and the heat of his breath elicits another tremor, another moan, another terribly satisfying clench of arousal in his gut. Hannibal pulls away, reaching into a nightstand by the bed and retrieving a small glass bottle that Will assumes is lube. His theory is proven correct as Hannibal drips the substance onto two fingers and promptly reaches between them to press insistently at Will’s tight hole.

It could almost be a sigh of relief that Will breathes as one finger pushes in, teases him with shallow thrusts for a moment before the second breaches him as well. “*Oh,*” Will whimpers as the two fingers set a steady rhythm within him, broken only occasionally as they spread to stretch him further.

Hannibal’s tongue trails lazily over the shell of his ear as he fingers him while Will squirms with both pleasure and anticipation. “You’ve tasked me with the responsibility of caring for you,” he tells Will in a low rumble. “I intend to do so.” He thrusts his fingers in to their final joints, crooking them as they drag out, stroking across that perfect spot. Will can’t stop the spasm that jerks through him at the jolt of pleasure. “My lovely boy,” he sighs into Will’s neck, sending another tremor through limbs that are quickly losing function.

Will longs to go lax, let the pleasure course through him. Let Hannibal use him as he sees fit.

“Daddy has you,” Hannibal assures him in a breath against his lips, and Will jerks against him again, cries out as his cock spasms his release between them.

“Oh, fuck, *fuck,*” he bites out as the waves of pleasure continue to spill over him. He’s distantly aware of Hannibal’s probing fingers pulsing against his prostate with every spurt of

come that leaves him.

And then they are gone, and overstimulated as he is, Will is about to whine his displeasure when they are replaced with Hannibal's hot, stiff length pressing in, *in,* as far as he can in one solid push until their hips are joined flush together.

"Naughty boy," Hannibal murmurs against his neck, punctuates the proclamation with a sharp bite. "Did I tell you you could come?"

"You wanted me to," Will pants, his body caught in a paradox of attempting to squirm away and bucking closer to the man above him.

"I *wanted,*" Hannibal growls in his ear, fists a hand in his hair and jerks his head back until his neck his pulled taut, exposed, "to feel my boy come undone around me." He gives a soft sigh, grasp loosening to pet soothingly over Will's stinging scalp. "You're just going to have to manage again," he laments, as though the prospect doesn't please him greatly.

He pulls away, retreating almost completely except for the cock buried inside him. At some point--probably when the world was fracturing around him--Will's hands had moved to clutch at the duvet beneath him. Hannibal captures his wrists, now, guides them up to stretch above Will's head and holds them there. His aching shoulders and upper back, still sore from last night and the hard labor of the day, twitch in protest at the position, though Will doesn't dare attempt to squirm away. It is, after all, much more comfortable when they aren't supporting the whole of his weight.

Hannibal pulls nearly all the way out of him and thrusts back in once, stilling when a broken moan cracks from Will's throat. "However long it takes," he adds, pulls out to fuck in again.

"Yes," Will groans, rolling his hips up to meet him, his hands stretched above him, clenching and unclenching as he fights the urge to reach out and touch. "*Yes,*" he moans again as Hannibal thrusts into him, tossing his head side to side as his overstimulated body is wracked with sensation. "*Hannibal."*

Strong hands seize his legs, pull them from their position wrapped around Hannibal's thighs to press them up, up, until he is fully exposed and vulnerable to the man above him, inside him. He sets a gruelling pace, tilting Will's hips in just a way so he can brush along his prostate with every movement until Will is a quaking, sobbing mess beneath him.

He's already hard again, somehow, and feels like a teenager for it. When one of Hannibal's hands leaves a thigh to grasp his cock and stroke, Will sounds a cry that is equal parts pleasure and torment. He's leaking already, barely able to contain his fluids with his current state of arousal, and he knows that he is so close again; so full and so, so close…

"Come inside me," he moans, begs, and just saying the words out loud releases another surge of heat to flow through his body. "Hannibal, *please,*" he pleads.

Hannibal bends low, face pressed to his neck, and Will nearly comes when he feels the low rumble of his thick accent against his throat. "Say it," he demands, and Will's breath leaves him in an agonized moan. "You know you want to," Hannibal purrs, "Say it."

“Please,” Will bites out. “M-make me come. *Daddy*-- ”

And that does it, Hannibal’s hand seizes in a firm grip around him one more time and Will is coming again, throat caught on a cry as he arches up into his tormentor. Hannibal comes as well, thrusting thrice more into him before stilling completely and spilling into him with a low hiss against his throat. They remain locked together for several minutes before Hannibal pulls away, retreats to the en suite before returning with a warm, wet cloth to wipe at the utter mess Will has made of himself.

Hannibal turns them, pulling Will back against his chest, his arms wrapped around his middle in a blatant display of possession. Will’s instinct is to rile at this but he bites it back, relaxes into the embrace when Hannibal’s soft lips trail tender across the back of his neck, down into the dip of his shoulder.

What he’s agreed to--this arrangement, this being reliant upon, vulnerable to another person--is utterly terrifying to him on a very basic level. But *this*--the heated sex, the mind-numbing orgasms, the feeling of being cared for afterwards--this is something wholly new; something that Will could become very much accustomed to.

After awhile, the arms that wrap around his middle begin to shift as Hannibal’s long fingers trail incoherent patterns across Will’s sweat-slicked stomach and hips. “Does the company pay for your lodgings?”

Will hums, his head twitching in a lazy nod of assent. “Basically. We receive a stipend for each city we’re contracted to with the intention that it’s used for lodging.”

“Intention?” Hannibal echoes curiously against his throat, and Will fights back a shiver.

“Most of the time it’s barely enough to cover a shit motel for the five days we’re in town,” Will explains. “Most of the time people have a greater need for food. Or booze. A lot of the guys that travel with campers end up at strip joints or at a corner where they can find some nice company for the evening.”

“And yourself?”

Will huffs a soft laugh at the implication. “I told you I was certain I was clean because I strictly *avoid* that sort of entertainment,” he assures him, settles back more comfortably against the furred chest behind him. “I mostly save it, if I can. Use it for online courses. Sometimes whiskey, if I’m having a tough month. Sometimes things come up with my car. I try to avoid motels unless the weather’s inclement. Sleep outside or in my car. Sometimes I cut a deal with those that have campers--still costs money, but far less. This week I chose the motel--it’s hot as the devil’s dick this time of year, and even the vague promise of air conditioning is better than hoping for a cool breeze at night.”

There’s a low hum against his shoulder, followed shortly by the soft press of lips. “Where are you off to next?”

Will heaves a sigh, closes his eyes in an attempt to draw up their summer map behind closed lids. “Pittsburgh. We’ll keep heading north until Labor Day, then move down to the south for

fall and winter tours."

"You should rest," Hannibal encourages. "Save your strength for travelling tomorrow."

Will snorts at that, but the sound morphs to a contented hum as one of Hannibal's hands trails up to stroke soothingly through his curls. "It's only a four hour drive," he murmurs, but his protest dies swiftly as the calming, rhythmic rise and fall of Hannibal's chest soothes him into sleep.

He awakes to a warm hand stroking tenderly down his cheek. He has slept long, and deep, and Hannibal has prepared breakfast for him. Will joins him in the dining room and eagerly tucks into a quiche that is both delicious and pretentious. With the next stop so close, he has the opportunity for a leisurely morning before he needs to get on the road, so he helps Hannibal with the dishes once they have finished eating.

Then he spends some time sagging against the kitchen counter when Hannibal decides he is still hungry and proceeds to swallow Will's dick until he comes so hard his knees knock together.

Hannibal then begins to see him off (or out, rather)--a process which easily extends into a thirty minute affair as they alternately flirt and make-out against the foyer wall near the front door. When it seems as though Will is finally going to make it across the threshold, Hannibal reaches into his pocket and pushes something into Will's palm.

He swallows thickly when he sees it's a thick roll of hundred dollar bills. His eyes dart back up to warm amber immediately. "...Hannibal…" he begins his protest.

His benefactor is quick to swallow Will's words, makes his counter-argument clear with every deft stroke of tongue on tongue. "I want you in a proper hotel for the remainder of your contract," he tells Will. "At *least* three stars, though I'd sleep more soundly with four. I will not have you returning only to bring bed bugs into this house from whatever by-the-hour establishment you would otherwise find yourself in. If that proves an insufficient amount please let me know. I would be happy to wire you more at any time."

"Hannibal…" Will squeaks again, clutching the most money he's ever held at once in one sweaty palm. He's very careful not to look at it again. If he looks at it then it becomes even more real, and the temptation may be too strong… "You don't have to…" he begins to protest again, pauses.

Because that's the point, isn't it? Hannibal doesn't have to, he *wants* to. He wants Will to have nice things, stay in nice places, and all he wants for it in return is the pleasure of Will's company. The pleasure of his body. The pleasure of a partner that delights in spilling the blood of the wicked; that understands the only purpose they serve is to be molded into something worthwhile, to be consumed, and doesn't shy away from it.

His last argument dies on his lips. "Thank you," he whispers instead, and his breath catches at the undeniably pleased expression on Hannibal's face. Because he is willing to accept what is

given. Because he understands *why* it is given. His cynical nature seeping through, Will's lips tug up into a smirk. "You realize I could take this and run, right?"

Hannibal gives a contemplative hum at that, pressing Will back into the wall behind him once more, their bodies flush together. Amusement flickers through his eyes at the pseudo-threat. "You will go, finish out your contract," Hannibal murmurs against the arched column of Will's neck. His lips drag upwards in a soft caress; along his jaw, resting at the upturned corner of Will's mouth. "When your contract is up, you will return to me," he states definitively, brushes across plush lips in a teasing kiss.

All at once, Hannibal's hand is wrapped tight around Will's throat, his grip applying pressure just under the curve of his jaw and pinning him to the wall in yet one more place. "You will do this or I will come for you," his grip tightens slightly and white sparks flash in front of Will's eyes. He is aware of his head feeling increasingly lighter, as if it would float up and away without Hannibal's hand to hold it to his body. "And I *would* find you, dear Will, wherever you may choose to run."

The threat--the promise--has Will harder than he's been all weekend, and he still has the wherewithal for a few moments to appreciate how utterly fucked up that is until Hannibal's other hand flattens roughly against his tented crotch, rubbing methodically over his arousal as his lips brush against Will's once again. Words. He's forming more words, though blackness is beginning to seep into the edges of his vision and Will is having trouble pulling his mind from every other sensation to focus on what those words might be.

Hannibal's grip loosens slightly and Will drags in a glorious breath of oxygen. His ears cease ringing long enough for him to catch the last of Hannibal's statement. "...and you will not appreciate the result if I am forced to do so."

The hand leaves his throat completely, moves instead to twist sharply into Will's hair. Quickly enough he is robbed of his newfound ability to breathe by Hannibal's hot, insistent tongue plunging into his mouth. The hand down south is still rubbing against him and Will becomes aware that he is moving as well, his hips shifting and bucking desperately into the friction. Hannibal's mouth moves to his ear, breathes hot and heavy into it, sending even more frissons of pleasure through him as he melts against the wall.

"You don't want to upset Daddy like that, do you?" he questions in earnest.

Will comes. God help him, that fucking word makes him come every time. He tries not to consider the fact that, as a psychiatrist, Hannibal is likely drawing some very damning conclusions about him in regards to that. It's easier to push the worry aside for now as his cock pulses his release into his pants and white-hot pleasure shivers through every last one of his nerve endings.

When he can breathe again, and see, and stand up without using the wall or Hannibal to aid him, Will pants out weakly, "See you in five weeks."

Hannibal catches his hand as he pulls away to depart, raising it to his lips to press a chaste kiss to his palm and purrs, "I look forward to it."

Will stumbles out to his car on legs as stable as jelly, luckily has the foresight to grab a new pair of jeans from the back and proceeds to struggle out of his soiled pants and shimmy into the fresh ones as he's seated behind the wheel, all while parked along the side of posh, upscale Bennington Lane. The engine turns over in one go, but Will remains sitting there for several moments, the windows rolled down to encourage the cool, morning air to blow through and return him fully to his senses.

When he feels like he can function again, Will shifts the car into drive and pulls away from the curb, turning the car to head to I-70, which will take him out of the city and towards Pittsburgh. He tries not to think about what he is sure to miss in the coming weeks, does not consider leaving it now as leaving it behind because, as he has chosen, it will still be there waiting for him in a month's time.

Before he has even left Baltimore proper he is anxious for the summer to end. Anxious to return to Hannibal. Terrified that, as he'd pointed out previously, five weeks may be well enough time for the eccentric man to change his mind about the whole endeavor. He sits on the metered on-ramp that leads to the highway, rife with traffic for the late morning commute. There are still several cars ahead of him in line, so when Will's phone gives two consecutive buzzes in the cup holder next to him he feels that it's not too terribly irresponsible to pick it up and check the notifications.

His heart falters when he sees that it's two texts, both from Hannibal.

In that book which is my memory,
On the first page of the chapter that is the
day when I first met you,
Appear the words, 'Here begins a new life'.

I eagerly await your return, sweet boy. Drive safely, and do call me when you've settled in.

A third buzz as Will stares at the messages, his stomach clenching with longing. The last message is the name and address of a hotel in Pittsburgh with accompanying room number. It appears that Hannibal has already called ahead to arrange lodging for him.

He glances up, pulls forward the correct amount when he sees a few cars have been granted access to the highway and then presses his foot into the brake as he turns his attention to the phone in his hand once more.

There are so many things he could say. His first instinct is still to tell Hannibal no, it's okay, you don't have to. It's too much, unnecessary, unasked for. Instead, he taps on the bar to activate his keyboard and types out:

Thank you. I will.

A sharp honk behind him signals that his turn has come and Will replaces the cell in the cup holder that is its resting spot, pulling forward with increasing speed until he is merging into traffic on the highway.

The doubt of time and distance have left him, replaced by a warmth in chest that makes his lungs feel tight. He continues on to Pittsburgh, to his next location that will hopefully yield fair weather and carnival enthusiasts with deep pockets. Perhaps a particularly unpleasant person or two.

He will see out the next five weeks, the next five cities--his last--with more enthusiasm, more confidence than he's ever had before, knowing with an assurance that is both thrilling and comforting what awaits him at the end. In Baltimore.

Chapter End Notes

Thus concludes part one of this story. Fear not, (ex)Carney Will and Sugar Daddy Hannibal will be returning in another segment that I have yet to name.

Thank you all for your time, your kudos, kind words of encouragement and subscriptions!

Forgot to note when I first posted this: The poem at the end there is Dante, because of course it is. La Vita Nuova.

Please drop by the Archive and comment to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!